



1936

# The Relation of the Schleswig-Holstein Question to the Unification of Germany: 1865-1866

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## Recommended Citation

Brennan, Katherine Marie, "The Relation of the Schleswig-Holstein Question to the Unification of Germany: 1865-1866" (1936).  
*Master's Theses*. Paper 68.  
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THE RELATION OF THE SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN QUESTION  
TO THE UNIFICATION OF GERMANY  
1865-1866

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS

IN

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY

JUNE,

1936

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## VITA AVETORIS

Katherine Marie Brennan was born in February 18, 1913, in Philadelphia, Pa. Her primary and secondary education, however, she received in the Middle West; and in September, 1930 entered Mundelein College, Chicago, Illinois. In June, 1934 she received the A.B. degree from Mundelein College.

In September, 1934 she entered the Graduate School of Loyola University as a part-time graduate student in history. The time since then has been spent in graduate study at the University.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Historians and diplomats have agreed that the question of the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein was a complicated one. Lord Palmerston said "that only three persons in Europe were completely acquainted with the truth, the Prince Consort who was dead, a German professor who was in a lunatic asylum, --and himself and he had forgotten it." In spite of this we venture to consider the relation between the question of the duchies and the unification of Germany.

In order to understand this relation, it is necessary to know the historical background of the question. In particular it is necessary to know the facts concerning the union existing between the two duchies and Denmark, and secondly, those concerning the laws of succession in the duchies and in Denmark. Because of the conditions that resulted from the union between the duchies and Denmark and the conflict over the succession, it was possible for Prussia to interfere in the affairs of the duchies.

In 1448, Christian I, Count of Oldenburg, became King of Denmark. He also inherited the dukedoms of Schleswig and of Holstein. At this time Christian is supposed to have promised<sup>1</sup> the duchies that they would remain undivided. The union, how-

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<sup>1</sup>Georg Herbert Munster-Ledenburg, Political Sketches of the State of Europe from 1814-67. Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1868, 60

ever, between the duchies and the kingdom was a personal union only, arising from the fact that the duke of Schleswig-Holstein became the king of Denmark. Secondly, according to the old feudal system females could reign in Denmark, but in the duchies the Salic law governed succession. Thus, on the extinction of the direct male line of the royal house, the kingdom and duchies would be separated: the kingdom would pass to the nearest royal prince while the duchies would pass to the nearest male heir.

Both in the duchies and in the kingdom, nationalism and liberalism developed, especially during the first part of the nineteenth century. For a time the liberals, German and Danish, cooperated, but by 1848 their aims were so divergent that their differences had developed into nationalistic antagonisms. The national party in the duchies, the Schleswig-Holsteiners, were imbued with the idea of a national German state which was to include not only Holstein and Lauenburg which were members of the German Confederation but would also include Schleswig. The claims of the Schleswig-Holsteiners were based on the following issues: that Schleswig and Holstein were independent, sovereign states and united to Denmark in a personal union only; that Schleswig and Holstein were inseparably united to one another, hence the name Schleswig-Holstein; and that the succession in the duchies was governed by the Salic law.

The second party was the nationalist party in Denmark and in this party may be included the Danish nationalists in Schleswig. The Eider-Danes as these people were called based their position on the following points: that Schleswig was rightfully a province of the kingdom having been incorporated in 1721; that the so-called inseparable union between Schleswig and Holstein could not be justified by either law or by history; and that the succession in the duchies and in the kingdom was the same and governed by the Lex Regia of 1665 which permitted the succession to pass through females. In criticism of these opposing claims, it is true that as a member of the German Confederation, Holstein was a sovereign state, but the status of Schleswig is more difficult to determine. However, it is true that the Eider-Danes were mistaken in maintaining that Schleswig had been incorporated with the kingdom. With regard to the real union of the duchies, "the Danes were justified in denying the applicability of the medieval charters on which the claim was based--the fact that the duchies had been fiefs of different suzerains seems conclusive against it--but a de facto union had developed that had long been recognized in practice." Relative to the law of succession, it is true that the Lex Regia had never been formally promulgated in Schleswig and that the old Salic law still

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applied.

In 1839 Frederick VI, King of Denmark, was succeeded by his nephew, Christian VIII. Christian had one son from whom he expected no heir. Alarmed at the consequences that would follow when the royal male line died out, namely, that the duchies and the kingdom would separate and each go its way under a different ruler, the Eider-Danes forced the government's hand. In 1846 Christian, in response to a question from the Estates of the Danish Islands, declared through a royal proclamation, known as the Open Letter, that the succession in Schleswig was the same as that in the kingdom. Some doubts as to certain parts of Holstein were expressed, but with regard to the doubts the government declared that it was exerting itself to clear them. This proclamation called forth a burst of indignation both in Germany and in the duchies, but before any change could be effected the Revolution of 1848 had begun.

In January, 1848 Christian VIII had died. His son allied himself with the Danish democratic party. In March, he issued a liberal constitution for Denmark and one was planned for the whole monarchy. This constitution was to link Schleswig more closely to the kingdom than to Holstein. The duchies rose and established a Provisional Government. At first the duchies were aided by the people of Prussia, but under pressure

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<sup>2</sup>Lawrence D. Steefel, The Schleswig Holstein Question. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932, 6-7.



from Russia and Great Britain, the Prussians withdrew from the duchies and made separate peace with Denmark. The revolt ended with the Schleswig-Holsteiners in control of Schleswig. The suppression of the Revolution of 1848 in Germany was effective in suppressing the revolt in the duchies. A conference was held at Olmütz in 1850 and as a result Austrian troops advanced into Holstein to disband the Schleswig-Holstein army. Three commissioners Austrian, Prussian, and Danish administered Holstein; Schleswig was returned to Denmark, and in 1852 Danish rule was in full operation.

Because it was foreseen that the union between Denmark and the duchies which had been established by a dynastic accident might be destroyed by another such accident, it was decided to take some measures to stabilize the succession. The main line of the ruling dynasty was dying out, and the succession was certain to pass through the female line to the Glücksburg branch of the family. Schleswig-Holstein, since its succession was governed by the Salic law, would pass, not to the Glücksburg heir, but to the younger Augustenburg branch. At a conference of the great powers held in London in 1852 this succession was changed and the succession to the Danish throne was regulated. The resulting treaty is known as the London Protocol. As a result of this conference the Duke of Augustenburg

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<sup>3</sup>Munroe Smith, Bismarck and German Unity. New York: The Columbia Press, 1915, 25.

gave up his possessions, and as compensation he received two million dollars. He renounced for himself and for his descendants all claims on the duchies.<sup>4</sup> Prince Christian of the Holstein Glücksburg branch was recognized as heir to the whole Danish monarchy, and was adopted by the King of Denmark. It further decreed that Schleswig should be permanently associated with Denmark. This protocol was signed by Austria and Prussia as European powers, not as members of the Confederation. The German Confederation did not ratify it nor did Schleswig-Holstein. Austria and Prussia in signing the treaty did so only in light of a previous treaty with Denmark by which she bound herself to respect the autonomy of Schleswig and Holstein, not to incorporate Schleswig nor to put any obstacle in the way of the use of the German language.<sup>5</sup> Denmark, unfortunately, did not observe these agreements.

From 1852 to 1863 Denmark by her actions succeeded in making herself very unpopular in the duchies. The Democratic party in Copenhagen was in power. The leaders were imbued with the ever constant idea of incorporating Schleswig and to make the Eider the southern boundary of Denmark. The engage-

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<sup>4</sup>Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy. Edited by Sir A.W. Ward and G.P. Gooch. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1923, II, 539. This reference states that the Duke did not sign away his rights.

<sup>5</sup>Smith, 26-27.

ments toward the duchies that Denmark had assumed in the treaty with Austria and Prussia in 1852 had not been kept. Public opinion in Germany was in favor of the oppressed duchies and the unpopular middle states sought to regain their popularity by favoring the rights of the duchies.<sup>6</sup>

The Diet of the German Confederation had discussed and amused itself with the question of the duchies between 1852 and 1863. However, on March 30, 1863 the Danish government took the first step in a series of events that was to lead to the eventual solution of the Dano-German question. On this date by a royal ordinance, the March Patent, Holstein was excluded from the common constitution of the Danish monarchy. It would seem also that the intention was to incorporate Schleswig into the monarchy.<sup>7</sup> The Patent was placed before the Federal Diet. The Diet called upon Denmark to revoke the Patent and to stand by the agreements of 1851 and 1852. This demand was made on July 9, 1863 and the reply was to be forthcoming within six weeks. On August 27, Denmark replied to the effect that she would not revoke the Patent. At the same time the Danish reply together with the demands of the Confederation were laid before the usual committee of the Diet. On October 1, 1863, it was voted that since Denmark had not ful-

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<sup>6</sup>Munster, 8.

<sup>7</sup>Steefel, 56.

filled its obligations, the demands of the Diet were to be enforced by a federal execution of Holstein.

In the meantime in Denmark, Hall, President of the Danish Council, had been pushing plans for a new Constitution the basis of which was the March Patent. The draft of the new Constitution passed its third reading on November 13, 1863. It legally established the common constitution for both Schleswig and the kingdom; it regulated the relations of this new constitutional unit to the German Federal lands of the monarchy; it provided for the composition and powers of the Rigsraad for Denmark and Schleswig. These were the new features of the Constitution but many of its provisions were the same as those of the Constitution of 1855. "Even assuming that the November Constitution involved neither the 'incorporation' of Schleswig nor a step leading thereto, the fact remains that it marks the definite abandonment of the 'whole State' policy provided for by the agreements of 1851-52."<sup>8</sup>

On the following day, November 15, Frederick VII, King of Denmark, died quite suddenly before he gave the new constitution his formal approval. He was the last male in the direct line of the Danish royal house. In accordance with the London treaty and the Danish law of succession of 1853 he was succeeded by Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein-Sondenburg-

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 74.

Glücksburg as King Christian IX. The first question that confronted the new king was whether or not he should sign the new constitution. This question was further complicated because he wanted to retain the friendship of all the people, yet his right to succeed to the duchies was questionable. Further, he did not want to alienate the people of the duchies nor did he wish to alienate the Danes. The ministry urged the king to sign the Constitution and he finally yielded signing it on November 18, 1863. It was to go into effect at the new year.

The death of Frederick complicated the question of the special rights of Schleswig with the broader question of succession in both duchies. According to the London Protocol, Christian IX became duke of Schleswig-Holstein as well as King of Denmark. The German Confederation, however, it will be remembered, had never signed the treaty nor agreed to its stipulations, nor had the people of Schleswig-Holstein. Prussia and Austria had signed only in view of a previous agreement with Denmark. When the news that Christian had signed the new Constitution arrived Germany there was an outburst of national feeling which found a rallying point around Prince Frederick of Augustenburg, the eldest son of Duke Christian who had renounced his rights to the duchies in 1852.<sup>9</sup> Notwithstanding the fact that his father had renounced his rights to the throne, Fred-

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<sup>9</sup>Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy. Edited by Sir A.W. Ward and G.P. Gooch. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1923, II, 539. This reference states that the Duke did not sign away his rights.

erick went to Gotha on November 17. He set up a Court there and was allowed to organize a provisional government, with two commissioners, one a Saxon and the other a Hanoverian. These two were to conduct the provisional government in the name of the Diet.<sup>10</sup> He acknowledged the Constitution of 1848 and set up a liberal ministry. The people of Holstein received him with acclamation as Duke Frederick VIII. The nobility of the duchy opposed him and were in favor of a union with Denmark, but later they changed and were in favor of a union with Prussia.

Not only were Denmark and the duchies disturbed by the claims of Frederick of Augustenburg but the other nations were interested because of the London treaty of 1852 which many of them had signed. Austria and Prussia were particularly interested. To Bismarck went the opportunity of deciding the course that Prussia was to follow. Two courses were open. Prussia could recognize the London Protocol as still binding and force Christian IX, as duke of Schleswig-Holstein, to observe the preliminary treaty that she and Austria had signed with Denmark which guaranteed the autonomy of Schleswig. On the other hand, Prussia could declare the London Protocol abrogated, recognize Frederick as the rightful duke and help him gain possession of Schleswig. To the Germans this latter course would have been favorable, but this would have been

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<sup>10</sup>Munster, 85.

harmful to the real interest, not only of the Germanies but of Prussia. The revolutionary nature of the popular program and the necessary scrapping of treaties that it would have entailed would have roused all Europe against Prussia. And even if successful, there would only have been added to the German states another petty state. This would be another obstacle in the way of Prussian hegemony. However, if the first course was adopted, namely, to accept the situation as it existed according to the London Protocol, Prussia would demand that Schleswig should not be incorporated by Denmark. If Bismarck won this point, Prussia would have to restore both duchies to Denmark, but this was what Austria desired and German patriots<sup>11</sup> feared. Bismarck, however, had satisfied himself that the Danish government would not consent to non-incorporation of Schleswig and would go to war rather than adhere to Prussian demands. Prussia did not act alone in this. Bismarck persuaded Austria that if she did not support him in these measures he and his ministry would retire. The consequences of this would be a wave of radicalism and liberalism that Austria alone could not avoid. On January 16, 1864 Austria and Prussia signed a joint agreement the provisions of which were as follows:

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<sup>11</sup>Smith, 28-31.

(1) a demand upon Denmark for the withdrawal of the November Constitution within 48 hours; (2) independent joint action by Prussia and Austria if the Confederate Diet refused to join proposed measures; (3) the preparation of the necessary military forces; (4) the suppression of possible hostile demonstrations in case of the occupation of Schleswig; (5) the acceptance of a conference of powers only after the withdrawal of the November Constitution; and (6) further consultation in case of interference by either power.<sup>12</sup>

The Diet did not approve of these measures, but Austria and Prussia acted as two great powers. The ultimatum was sent to Denmark on the same day that the agreement between the two powers was signed. The ministers of Austria and Prussia presented the ultimatum, but the reply was a refusal. Even if the king had been inclined to withdraw the new Constitution, he had to have the consent of the parliament. The time given for the answer, two days, was insufficient for such procedure. Then, the king felt that he had the support of the people and a reasonable expectation of foreign intervention so he did not hesitate to refuse. Diplomatic relations were broken off after the refusal was given.

In spite of the presence of the Federal Army, which had been in Holstein since the federal execution on December 7, 1863, the Austro-Prussian army which had been in readiness

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<sup>12</sup>Lucius H. Holt and A.W. Chilton, History of Europe from 1862 to 1914, from the Accession of Bismarck to the Outbreak of the Great War. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918, 77.



marched into Holstein and advanced towards the Eider and the frontier of Schleswig. On January 31, 1864 before marching into Schleswig, the two powers announced that the integrity of Denmark would be respected and that the two powers were willing to attend a European conference. But if Denmark opened hostilities all treaty obligations were annulled and foreign intervention would only make the fate of Denmark more precarious. On February 1, 1864 the allied troops, 60,000 Austrians and Prussians began to cross the Eider into Schleswig. The Danes could not withstand the onslaughts of the allies and on April 18, the fortifications at Düppel were stormed by the Prussians. A week later, April 25, representatives of the European powers met in London for a conference. Bismarck had acceded to the requests of Great Britain for a conference. On May 12, a truce of one month was arranged, but later it was extended until June 25. The negotiations were fruitless. Denmark refused to return to a personal union and demanded the annexation of part of Schleswig. By this action Denmark alienated the other powers many of whom had been friendly toward her.

War was resumed on June 25 when General Herwath von Bittenfeld stormed the island of Als en. The Danes had considered this island impregnable without a fleet. The Prussian army would have gone to Fühnen also, but Austria who had entered Jutland against her will refused to cooperate with Prussia in

these measures. While the Austrians and Prussians were victorious, the Saxons and Hanoverians had to stand idly by and in many places collisions occurred.<sup>13</sup> A preliminary peace was signed in which Denmark yielded up her rights in the three duchies--Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg. After further negotiations to determine the boundary lines and to determine the duchies' share of the Danish debt, the final treaty of peace was signed at Vienna on October 27, 1864.

Thus ended the first step in Bismarck's design to eliminate Austria from the German Confederation. He had separated the duchies from Denmark; he had succeeded in having them placed under the joint possession of Austria and Prussia. Furthermore, Prussia had always appeared diplomatically in the right and her opponent in the wrong. In this way the intervention of France and England on behalf of Denmark had been forestalled, and a possible attack from Austria had been forestalled because her support had been enlisted.

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<sup>13</sup>Munster, 87.

## CHAPTER I CONVENTION OF GASTEIN

At the conclusion of the treaty of peace with Denmark, Austria and Prussia exercised joint sovereignty over the two duchies. This was what Bismarck desired because it would furnish a convenient pretext for war with Austria. Bismarck considered such a war necessary to the successful solution of the question of German unity. The duchies themselves were a stake in the game because while they would be of little advantage to Austria, their annexation to Prussia would be gainful and feasible. If the duchies were of no possible gain to Austria, why had Austria joined Prussia? Austria could not have acted differently. If Bismarck had rejected the London Protocol, then Austria could have appeared as the defender of the treaty. Unfortunately for Austria, Bismarck abided by the treaty. If she had not joined Prussia, then Prussia would have defended them alone, and consequently would have annexed the duchies and gained the prestige and power for herself alone. That Austria was duped cannot be maintained<sup>1</sup> because she realized the purpose in Bismarck's mind.

The Condominium exercised by the two powers led quite early to trouble. Austria was willing to turn over the duchies to Prussia in return for compensation in Silesia, but William was not willing to give up any portion of his dominions. After this refusal, Austria pushed forward the claims

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<sup>1</sup>Smith, 32-34.

of Frederick of Augustenburg. Under him the duchies were to become members of the German Confederations. Many of the Germans as well as some Prussians favored this solution, but not Bismarck. His policy was one whereby the duchies would eventually be incorporated in Prussia. In order to accomplish this, it was necessary to keep off the throne of the duchies, Duke Frederick of Augustenburg. However, Bismarck could not refuse Austria outright when she pressed these claims. Instead he delayed the matter by questioning not only the validity of the Augustenburg claims which were surrounded with a certain amount of doubt, but also the claims of others;<sup>2</sup> among the claimants was the Grand Duke of Oldenburg.

In the duchies themselves there was considerable agitation in favor of the Hereditary Prince. After the military occupation by Austria and Prussia had been established and the provisional government set up according to the provisions of the treaty of Vienna, a pretense was made of permitting the people of the duchies to express their wishes with respect to the future government of the duchies. In Holstein public meetings were held at which the almost unanimous vote was that the people desired to be united to the German Confederation as a sovereign state under the Prince of Augustenburg.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Lucius H. Holt and A.W. Chilton, History of Europe from 1862-1914. New York: Macmillan Company, 88.

<sup>3</sup>Sir Alexander Malet, The Overthrow of the Germanic Confederation by Prussia in 1866. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1870, 96.

The civil commissioners who were administering the affairs the affairs of the duchies for the condominium powers inquired on December 7, 1864, of the clergy and civic officers of the duchies as to their wishes with regard to the future government of the duchies. To this inquiry they replied that their wishes were identical to those already expressed by the people.<sup>4</sup> Toward the end of December, a small portion of the landed population led by Baron Scheel Plessen expressed its wishes for annexation to Prussia. But this elicited expressions of counter-opinion from the greater majority of the population.

On January 12, 1865 a committee of the Schleswig-Holstein union publicized a proclamation containing 60,000 signatures protesting any attempt to infringe on the relation existing between the Hereditary Prince and the duchies. This publication also protested any possible attempt to segregate part of the territory under another ruler. Further demonstrations of this kind followed in February. However, other events with regard to the relations between Austria and Prussia took place during February. On February 21, 1865 the Austrian government was the recipient of a Prussian despatch to the effect that the latter government required the assistance and cooperation of the Imperial government in a system of government for the duchies which she (Prussia) had evolved. The contents of this despatch laid down the conditions which Prussia considered essential to maintain in order to safeguard the in-

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

terests of both Prussia and Germany in the duchies. To this despatch Count Mensdorff, the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, replied on March 5. Mensdorff, in a definite tone, said that the conditions laid down by the Prussian government were not consonant with Federal rights. At the same time he demanded the re-establishment of the independence of both duchies and that their future relations with Prussia be conducted according to the articles of the Federal Diet.

These measures had been demanded by Prussia in order to subdue the various agitations in the duchies. To this Prussian despatch, or to the February demands as they are better known, representatives of the two duchies replied in a declaration dated March 26. This declaration rejected for the most part the February demands of Prussia; secondly, it indicated certain concessions which their future Duke might make without infringing on the rights of the duchies. On April 19, 117 delegates of the Schleswig-Holstein associations approved this declaration, as had the Prince himself on March 31.

While the duchies and the governments of Austria and Prussia were busy trying to effect a solution, the other members of the Confederation were anxious to bring about a solution that would be satisfactory to the whole Confederation. Consequently on March 27, Bavaria, Saxony, and the

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 98-99.

Grand Duchy of Hesse placed a proposition relative to the solution of the question before the assembly of the Diet. The motion was as follows:

Awaiting ulterior decision, the Diet confidently expects that the Governments of Austria and Prussia will now hand over the Duchy of Holstein to the Government of the Hereditary Prince of Schleswig-Holstein-Augustenburg; and communicate with the Diet in reference to the agreement they have come to concerning the Duchy of Lauenburg.

There are some who maintain that this proposition was instigated by Austria, but the truth of this cannot be determined.<sup>6</sup> The Prussian government, however, was inclined to believe this. The arguments of Saxony and Bavaria as expressed by their respective leaders, Beust and Pfordten, contained a great deal of truth, but Bismarck was not to be defeated. While the leaders in the lesser states might see what the outcome would be they could do nothing. Bismarck was supported not only by Moltke and the army, but by men such as Heinrich von Treitschke who said: "In this matter Schleswig-Holstein positive law is irreconcilable with the vital interests of our country. We must set aside positive law and compensate those who may be injured in consequence. . . ." <sup>7</sup> Bismarck, of course, denied

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<sup>6</sup>Heinrich Von Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire by William I. (Transl. by Marshall Livingston Perrin). New York: Thomas Y. Crowell and Company, [1891, c.d.] IV, 109-113.

<sup>7</sup>R.B. Mowat, A History of European Diplomacy, 1815-1914. London: Edward Arnold and Company, 1927, 186.

the right of the Diet to handle this situation.

Nevertheless, on April 6, the vote on the proposition submitted by the three states was taken and was adverse to Prussia by a vote of nine to six. To this decision Prussia replied she expected that before any formal declaration of views was made by the Diet that an inquiry into the various claims, not only those of Augustenburg, should be made, and that those of the House of Brandenburg should be considered. Austria adhered to the proposition of the three states only to the extent to which it did not disturb the relations existing between Austria and Prussia.

The population of the duchies was becoming more outspoken and more audacious in the plans for the coronation of Prince Frederick of Augustenburg. On April 3, Baron von Zedlitz, the Prussian commissioner in the duchies, issued a statement to the effect that the Prussian marine station was to be transferred from Danzig to Kiel. At first, Halbhuber, the Austrian commissioner, agreed to take part in the preliminary arrangements, but on April 11, he received word from Vienna to stop the preparations; which he did by forbidding the governments of the duchies to take part in the preparations. Later he published his prohibition in the newspapers. Mensdorff made the official protest to Berlin for Austria as

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<sup>8</sup> Sybel, IV, 112. Royal command to this effect had been issued on March 24 by William to the Minister of the Navy to signify that Prussia would not be pushed out of the duchies by either the Diet or Augustenburg.



a member of the Confederation and as a joint owner in Schleswig. The matter was finally decided by Austria's pacific policy. Austria agreed to this transfer of the naval station on condition that the military forces of Prussia should be reduced by a number equal to that of the force to be stationed<sup>9</sup> at Kiel.

On April 20 and 21, occurred an event of not much importance in itself but one with a certain amount of significance. On these dates cornerstones of two monuments to commemorate those who died in the war of 1864 were laid in Alsen and Düppel. Both Austrian and Prussian troops took part in this commemoration. But the Prussian royal rescript which was published on the occasion stated that these monuments would serve to keep up the courage of those who had fought in the war of 1864, "if called on to defend the fruit of their victory with the sword." This seems to indicate that there was present the idea of a future conflict with regard to the disposal of the duchies.

Meanwhile, Bismarck was pressing plans for the convening of the Assembly of the Estates of Schleswig and Holstein under the joint authority of Austria and Prussia. From this assembly he hoped to obtain, at least, accession to the demands put forth in the February despatch, if not consent to

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<sup>9</sup>Malet, 104.

annexation of the duchies by Prussia. Von Richthofen, Ambassador in Hamburg, Baron Scheel Plessen in Holstein, and Baron von Zedlitz advised against this. They maintained that this would only be playing into the hands of the political societies who controlled the duchies and who would only vote against the demands of Prussia. These societies favored Augustenburg. Bismarck communicated his plans for convoking the Estates to the Austrian government on April 17.

Mensdorff replied on April 27 to the effect that this proposition was both surprising and disagreeable. He further insisted on the rights of Augustenburg as sovereign. However, Austria would agree to summon the Estates before the actual coronation of the sovereign (this Austria considered opposed to all principles of government) on three conditions:

'First, in all negotiations with the Estates, the supreme civil authorities must act strictly on the basis of the joint ownership; neither of the two Governments shall by itself have any separate dealings with the Estates. Secondly, in the summons the object in view shall be distinctly stated and limited; the Estates must be given to understand that they have to express the wishes of the country, but that this expression shall in no way anticipate or interfere with the decision of the future sovereign, nor, so far as Holstein is concerned, with the decrees of the German Confederation. Thirdly, Austria is willing to have the Estates summoned according to the electoral law of 1848; but yet, since the Constitutions

of 1854 have never been revoked, it seems advisable, in order to insure the legality of the assembly to allow the convention of the same to be authorized by the Estates as they now exist.<sup>10</sup>

Prussia could not accept these conditions because they were contrary to her plans, and secondly, because these conditions implied Austria's assent to the Prussian February demands, but these had already (March 5, 1865) been refused by Austria.

Bismarck replied to this latest Austrian note on May 7, and at the same time suggested that an assembly should be called, the representatives to be chosen by universal suffrage and direct election. He also suggested that it would not be proper for the Hereditary Prince to remain in the duchies while the elections were held. Austria accepted this second Prussian proposal, but with conditions.<sup>11</sup>

Great interest was evinced in the negotiations between the two powers. France, Hanover, and Bavaria in particular showed their interest. In France the newspapers were very friendly to Bismarck. However, in the duchies the effect of the Prussian proposals was unfavorable. The people regarded these measures as a subterfuge for a Prussian retreat. Consequently, the agitation for Augustenburg was increased by the members of the political societies. Bismarck, however, had

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<sup>10</sup>Sybel, IV, 125, cites the Austrian reply of April 27.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 128.

been warned that this would happen, but he had proceeded against the advice of Scheel Plessen and Zedlitz. The agitators began to formulate platforms in which they stated that no man would be chosen as a representative unless he promised "to vote in the very first session for the proclamation of Duke Frederick VIII as sovereign, and for the resolution that the Assembly is incompetent to act until the Duke is crowned." Bismarck still remained self-assured of the success of his plans.

Prussia still had complaints to offer against the attitude of Austria. These were compiled and forwarded to Werther, the Prussian Minister at Vienna. Werther was instructed to discuss each one separately with Mensdorff. At the same time, however, he was instructed to assure Mensdorff of Prussia's desire for peace, but to indicate that the Prussian government was willing to resort to armed force, if the occasion demanded such a display. To these complaints Mensdorff agreed to prevent the proclamation of Augustenburg as Duke. He further agreed to urge Halbhuber to adopt a more friendly attitude toward Prussia. Unfortunately, the main tenor of the Austrian reply was haughty and domineering, and the Austrians persisted in their first views. This attitude, however, caused no alarm in Prussia because the Prussian government was well aware of the internal dissension of the Austrian empire. On May 19, instructions were drawn up for

General Manteuffel in case it was necessary to send him to Vienna if relations became any worse. The purpose of his mission was to be to bring about a better understanding.

Before this precipitous mission was to take place, a Ministerial Council was held in Berlin on May 29. The King presided, and both the Crown Prince and Moltke attended. The King stated that although the war of 1864 had been conducted not for Prussian interests, but for national ones, that Austria was fully cognizant of the fact that Prussia expected to be repaid for her sacrifices. Bismarck then rose and continued with his remarks. First, Prussia could limit herself to the February demands; secondly, Prussia could secure the duchies through the payment of an indemnity to Austria, and a payment could also be made to the claimants to the throne of the duchies; and, thirdly, Prussia could secure the duchies by a formal demand for annexation. The attitude of the Austrian Emperor with regard to the second alternative was already known, and consequently was not to be considered. The third alternative would undoubtedly bring about war with Austria. The majority of the Council was against measures that would lead to war; the King reserved his decision; and Manteuffel was not sent to Vienna.

Between May 24 and June 24, several notes were exchanged between Bismarck and Mensdorff. The purpose of these was to determine how the elections should be conducted, whether or

not the Hereditary Prince should remain in the duchies, and to decide what procedure should be adopted with regard to other claimants, namely, the Grand Duke of Oldenburg, who was a Confederate Prince. On June 24, Mensdorff, however, decided to adopt a more conciliatory policy toward Prussia. He was forced to do this because he did not wish to come to issue with Prussia in view of the precarious situation of the internal affairs of the Empire. Austria agreed to the establishment of the naval port and Confederate fortress at Kiel. With regard to military control, the Austrian government said that it could not decide, but that this decision lay with the Confederate Diet. The other arrangements would have to be made between Prussia and the future sovereign. Consequently, the first step was to decide who the future sovereign would be. The Prussian cabinet recognized Austria's change of manner by declaring its readiness to submit the question of the military organization of the Holstein contingent to the Confederation. Prussia also stated that she was disposed to establish the Grand Duke of Oldenburg as Duke, if Austria would join her in this action. On this point, however, they were as far apart as ever for Austria still favored Augustenburg while Prussia would accept him on no conditions whatever.

In the duchies, meanwhile, the agitation in favor of Augustenburg continued, and annexation to Prussia was

ridiculed and despised on every side. The Austrian government, however, realized that the cause of Augustenburg might be fostered more advantageously if he removed himself from the duchies. Consequently, a note suggesting this was sent to him at Kiel, accompanied by an Austrian declaration of protection for him. At this same time the same thought occurred to William who sent him a letter advising his absence from the duchies. But Frederick refused to withdraw. His cause was looked upon with greater favor than ever by the population of the duchies. Arrangements were made for the celebration of the birthday of the Prince on July 6. Simultaneously, the crown lawyers presented their findings with regard to the right of Augustenburg to the throne of the duchies, which right they declared did not exist. The basis for this judgment was the Law of Succession which had been established by the London Protocol of 1852. There were many legal intricacies and artifices in this report which made it interesting and which succeeded in giving it importance from both an international and a national viewpoint.<sup>12</sup> This report finally released William from any obligations that he had felt concerning Augustenburg as a rightful German prince. From that time on the February demands became the Prussian program of procedure in the duchies.

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 158-165. Consult these pages for a description of the Council of Crown lawyers and for a criticism of this report.

Consequently Zedlitz in the duchies was instructed to suppress any dangerous agitation and also to suppress in as many instances as possible any celebration of the birthday of Augustenburg. At the same time the King addressed a note to the Emperor of Austria asking for his cooperation in removing the Prince from the duchies. While waiting for a reply from the Emperor, the Prince's birthday was celebrated in the duchies. In the towns, there were large demonstrations, especially in Kiel, but in the rural districts there were no such demonstrations. These districts had acceded to Zedlitz's proclamation of July 5. Because of the possibility of war with Austria, if the Emperor's answer was not satisfactory, the Prussian government began to make military preparations. The word that the government received from the military officials was very satisfactory as to the condition of the Prussian military forces.

On July 11 or 12, there arrived from Vienna a despatch from the Emperor and one from Mensdorff. Both urged the Prussian King to desist in his hostile attitude toward the prince and to recognize him as the sovereign of the duchies. In Mensdorff's letter he asked whether or not a special agent could be sent by Prussia to either Carlsbad or to Gastein to discuss the Schleswig-Holstein question. Bismarck answered that this would be acceptable and that Austria's concessions had been quite satisfactory except for her re-



fusal to change her policy with regard to Augustenburg. The Prince, he considered as an undermining influence in the duchies.

A Council of the Ministry was called to meet at Ratisbon on July 21 to consider what final measures were to be adopted by Prussia with regard to the duchies and the Austrian attitude.<sup>13</sup> Besides the ultimatum which was to be prepared to be sent to Austria, preparations for military measures in Holstein were made. Instructions were prepared to be sent to General Herwarth in case such military measures were necessary. Prussia also took steps to assure herself of the friendly attitude of France and of Italy. The ultimatum that was sent to Austria read as follows:

'All negotiations concerning the future of the Duchies are refused until authority is established there and all agitation done away with. When this is accomplished, Prussia will be ready to treat with Austria concerning the establishment of the Grand Duke of Oldenburg as sovereign. The candidacy of Augustenburg is entirely out of the question for us, so long as the Hereditary Prince persists in his attitude of usurpation. Should Austria refuse to restore order in the Duchies, Prussia will find herself in a situation necessitating self-defense, and will, on her own account, instruct General Herwarth to take the necessary steps. The further decision, whether or not Herwarth shall receive

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<sup>13</sup>Letter of Bismarck to Crown Prince, July 15, 1865 with regard to the Conference.

orders to this effect, depends upon the proposed visit of the Emperor Francis Joseph to Gastein, and the result of the meeting of the two Sovereigns.<sup>14</sup>

After the ultimatum was sent, the King, Bismarck, and General Manteuffel set out for Gastein, but stopped en route at Salzburg for a conference with von Pfordten, the President of the Bavarian Ministry. Pfordten had reviewed the Prussian cause with greater favor than his colleague Beust of Saxony. Beust refused to adopt any other than a hostile attitude toward Prussia. At Salzburg, on July 25, Pfordten after conversations with Bismarck and the King became convinced of Prussia's<sup>15</sup> desire for peace. After his return to Munich he communicated these impressions to Count Mensdorff and to Augustenburg, urging the latter to abide by the wishes of William.

Meanwhile in Austria there was a change in the Ministry. Dissatisfaction with the Schmerling ministry had been expressed throughout the Empire. On July 27, a new ministry was formed with Belcredi as Minister of State and President of the Ministerial Council. Despite these precarious conditions --the army had been reduced, Hungary was expressing dissatisfaction--Mensdorff had to reply to the Prussian ultimatum. In

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<sup>14</sup>Sybel, IV, 175, cites this ultimatum.

<sup>15</sup>Munster, 91. Bismarck is reported to have said to Pfordten that "if the rest of Germany would only be sensible enough to play the part of a passive spectator, the duel between Austria and Prussia might be fought out."

view of the internal affairs of the Empire a peaceful policy was the wisest one to adopt. Count Esterhazy, the minister without a portfolio, favored a conciliatory policy toward Prussia.<sup>16</sup> At this time Count Blome, the Austrian ambassador<sup>17</sup> at Munich came to Esterhazy with his plan for conciliation. Count Blome was a native nobleman of Holstein and as such he opposed Augustenburg, but as an Austrian diplomat he was forced to uphold Austria's support of Augustenburg.

His plan was very simple: Austria would annex Holstein, and Prussia, Schleswig. Esterhazy approved this plan as did<sup>18</sup> the Emperor. Blome was given instructions to go to Gastein. First he was to attempt to gain Prussian recognition for Augustenburg. Secondly, if Prussia persisted in her opposition, he was to inquire as to the possibility of the adoption of his plan of division. At the same time Herwarth was carrying out some of his instructions; and the notes exchanged between Bismarck and Mensdorff were inimical to the success of Blome's efforts. Blome according to instructions began his overtures by requesting that Prussia recognize

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<sup>16</sup> Chester Wells Clark, Franz Joseph and Bismarck. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934, 241. See also, Sybel, IV, 180-189 for description of internal affairs.

<sup>17</sup> Clark, 254-256, for origin of Blome's plan.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

Frederick. Bismarck answered by refusing to consider Augustenburg and continued to press the claims of the Grand Duke of Oldenburg. He said that Prussia could proceed to no settlement until she was guaranteed that her February demands would be accepted. According to him, the Grand Duke of Oldenburg was likely to accede to these demands. Blome also had an interview with the King who said that Austria had been placing obstacles in the way of Prussia ever since the Seven Years' War. William also complained of Halbhuber's conduct in the duchies. Blome had answered these charges without informing either the King or Bismarck of his alternate plan. Finally he spoke in bare outline of this plan to Bismarck to which the latter replied that the plan might be worthwhile, but that certain reservations would probably have to be made. Nothing definite was to be decided until the two sovereigns<sup>19</sup> would meet. Blome returned to Ischl on July 31, where the Emperor was staying.

A Ministerial Council was held at which Franz Joseph<sup>20</sup> himself presided. There was a party in the Council which de-

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<sup>19</sup>Letter of Bismarck to William, August 1, 1865 requested that this plan be kept secret. Partition was the last resort.

<sup>20</sup>Clark, 275. This Council was secret; no secretaries admitted, but Ministers alternated at taking the minutes. No copies of these minutes have been retained in the archives. "One thing was certain; the 'inevitable' war with Prussia had now become a very real fact to all, and even to the Emperor himself." Clark, 282.

Biegleben, the expert on German affairs, was thunderstruck at the idea of partition. He had been kept in ignorance of the plan in order to forestall his opposition to it.

sired to go to war rather than desert Augustenburg. However, the Emperor who was still anxious to preserve peace decided to endorse Blome's proposals. The plan was drawn up in detail according to orders and approved by both Mensdorff and the Emperor. On August 7, the Emperor sent King William an autograph letter which was taken to Gastein by Blome and presented to William on August 8. The Emperor remarked in it that the course they were about to adopt was not "consistent with the original aim of the Danish war." During the time in which Blome had been at Ischl, Prussia had pushed forward her war preparations, and had been sounding France and Italy with regard to their attitudes in case of war. By the time Blome returned, however, no definite agreements had been made.

The second and final set of negotiations began at Gastein on August 10, 1865. Prussia still insisted that she would not consider a proposition alluding to the final disposition of the duchies until order was restored therein. Consequently, the discussion centered round Blome's proposal for rearranging<sup>21</sup> the government of the duchies. Blome presented his plan some of which points displeased Bismarck who himself had worked out a more definite proposition. However, Bismarck in view of the European situation which was not definitely favorable to him, decided to make no mention of his plan, but to accept Blome's proposals. Austria, in proposing this plan which became the

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<sup>21</sup>See Appendix A.

basis for the final treaty, implied that she and Prussia were the legitimate sovereigns in the duchies since no one but a sovereign could have the proper authority to dispose of possessions. Consequently, this should have meant that the Austen-  
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 burg agitation would be subdued because his claims were fallacious if Austria and Prussia were the legitimate sovereigns.

On August 14, Bismarck and Blome signed the completed  
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 treaty, and on August 20, the treaty was ratified by William and Franz Joseph at a meeting in Salzburg. The treaty was to go into effect on September 15. It provided that the government of Holstein was to be administered by Austria and that of Schleswig by Prussia. The Emperor of Austria ceded his rights in Lauenburg for an indemnity of 2,500,000 Danish rix-  
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 dollars. There were other provisions with regard to fortifications. Prussia named General Baron von Manteuffel as

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<sup>22</sup>For the intricacies of this argument see Sybel, IV, 214-215.

<sup>23</sup>Preamble and Articles 1,3,4,5,6,8, and 9 are the work of Biegleben with a few additions by Bismarck and Blome. Articles 2,7,10, and 11 are the work of Bismarck.

Bismarck said: "'Well, I never should have expected to find an Austrian diplomat who would put his name to that.'" See Clark, 290 and footnote.

<sup>24</sup>For the complete provisions see Appendix B.

Munster, 91. "Austrian diplomacy succeeded for the moment at Gastein in putting off the struggle. The Gastein Convention surprised all the world, standing, as it did, in direct opposition to Bismarck's demands."

Clark, 297, considers it a triumph for Prussia.

Carleton J.H. Hayes, Political and Social History of Modern Europe. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929, II, 187. Considers it a triumph for Bismarck.

governor of Schleswig and Austria named Lieutenant Field Marshal Baron von Gablenz as governor of Holstein. The civil commissioners retained their positions with the exception of Baron Halbhuber who was replaced by Herr von Hofmann. Thus, the catastrophe that both Prussia and Austria had protested against and waged war in 1864 was accomplished, namely, the separation of the two duchies.<sup>25</sup>

Finally, what were the effects of the treaty. In both Italy and France the treaty was regarded with distrust, and was censured openly in France by the government. At this same time the English fleet was recalled from the Mediterranean to take part in joint manoeuvres with the French fleet at Cherbourg.<sup>26</sup> But more interesting is the attitude of the Diet<sup>27</sup> toward the treaty. As a rider to their propositions, the members of the Diet requested the two powers to inform the members of the intentions of the former with regard to the final disposition of the duchies, and whether an assembly of the Estates of Holstein and one of the Estates of Schleswig would be convoked. In reply to this the two powers submitted on August 24, the treaty of Gastein itself and added a state-

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<sup>25</sup>Mowat, 187.

<sup>26</sup>Malet, 111-112.

<sup>27</sup>Dated March 27. See page 16.

ment that both Austria and Prussia were anxious for a definite solution and that the Diet could expect such a one. To this the Diet replied that the statement of the two powers had been unsatisfactory. This was followed by a motion which provided that a general assembly of the representatives of Holstein should be held, and secondly, that the Diet and the two powers should act together for the incorporation of Schleswig into the Confederation. On November 18, the Austria and Prussian representatives answered this motion in a manner tantamount to a refusal to permit the Diet to interfere with the actions of the two powers with regard to the duchies.<sup>28</sup> This reply of November is important because it was the last action participated in jointly by the two powers with regard to the solution of the question of the duchies.

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<sup>28</sup>Malet, 119-121.



## CHAPTER II PRUSSIAN ATTEMPTS AT ALLIANCE

The treaty of Gastein was only a truce, not a solution of the question. Prussia intended that she would possess the duchies some day. The February demands testify to the truth of this. How then, was Prussia to obtain possession of the duchies? Whatever means she decided to adopt, it would be necessary to have treaties of alliance in order to protect herself from aggression by either Italy or France.

Bismarck first turned his attention to France. Immediately after the publication of the treaty, the French newspapers attacked it vehemently. This pleased Drouyn de Lhuys, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, who favored Austria, and opposed a strengthening of the French alliance with Prussia. Napoleon III expressed his regret that the two powers had not done that which they had promised to do and for which they had fought Denmark, namely, to maintain the indivisible union of the two duchies. However, because of the conversations which took place between Goltz, the Prussian Ambassador at Paris, and Napoleon, the latter adopted a more friendly attitude. Goltz explained that the treaty of Gastein provided for a temporary arrangement only in the administration of the duchies, and that it did not purport to effect a final solution of the question of sovereignty.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Sybel, IV, 230-236.

Meanwhile, Drouyn de Lhuys was doing what he could to weaken the cause of Prussia in France. He had had published in newspapers throughout Europe the circular letter of the French government to its ambassadors. This letter was dated August 29, 1865. It condemned the policy pursued by Prussia in very strong terms. This was followed by the publication of a despatch from Lord John Russell, dated September 14, in which Russell expressed similar views. The news of the publication of these two despatches was received with surprise in Berlin. However, the friendly attitude of France seemed assured when Napoleon left for Biarritz on September 7. He was accompanied by Count Goltz and another Prussian diplomat, a son of General von Radawitz.

Bismarck, also, at this time decided to go to Biarritz. He was interested in the attitude of France and he wanted to see for himself whether or not Napoleon was favorable to Prussia. At this time, Bismarck was not worried about the attitude of the German states. The reason for this was that these states were engaged in expressing their dissatisfaction with the course adopted by Austria when she came to a separate agreement with Prussia.<sup>2</sup> Austria had always been looked upon with favor by the German states, but this incident had de-

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<sup>2</sup> Sir James Wycliffe Headlam-Morley, Bismarck and the Foundations of the German Empire. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1899, 240.

stroyed their esteem and confidence. Secondly, Bavaria, the strongest of the lesser states, might soon enlist on the side of Prussia because of this reversal in Austrian foreign policy. Bismarck, therefore, felt safe for the present with regard to the relations of the German states and Prussia. In the meantime, Drouyn de Lhuys at the insistence of Napoleon had apologized in a private statement for the extremeness of the French circular of August 29.<sup>3</sup> Bismarck left for Biarritz on September 30 via Paris. He consulted with the Emperor until October 12, the date of the latter's departure. Bismarck remained in Biarritz for the rest of October.

Previous to his departure from Berlin, Bismarck had had conversations with Lefebvre de Bebain, the French charge' d' affaires. He intimated to Lefebvre what promises he hoped to obtain from Napoleon with regard to a French alliance of some sort.<sup>4</sup> Before proceeding directly to Biarritz, Bismarck stopped in Paris for a day where he first visited Rouher, the Minister of State, who was more friendly to a Prussian alliance for France than to an Austrian one. In order not to slight Drouyn de Lhuys, Bismarck visited him also. Drouyn

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<sup>3</sup> Adolphus Ward, Germany, 1815-1890 (Cambridge Historical Series, 8). New York: The Macmillan Company, 207. Correction of Sybel, IV, 242, line 3. Ward says that apology was not a despatch as stated in Sybel.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

de Lhuys was very cordial toward Bismarck and explained that his hostile attitude had been the result of a fear that the duchies would be annexed to Prussia without compensation for France. He further suggested some possible advantages that might accrue to France, but said that he had no designs on Prussian or French territory. This intimation was similar to that made by Lefebvre in Berlin.<sup>5</sup> There is some evidence to indicate that Drouyn de Lhuys spread a rumor in France, at a later date, that Bismarck intended to make large extensions of Prussian territory.<sup>6</sup>

On the second day of his stay in Biarritz, Bismarck was granted an interview with Napoleon. Napoleon was anxious to undo the damage done by the circular of August 29, and hastened to explain that he did not always have complete knowledge of the details concerning foreign affairs. The Emperor was also anxious to know if there were any unpublished "commitments" to the treaty of Gastein that would endanger France and that guaranteed Venetia to Austria.<sup>7</sup> But Bismarck assured him that Prussia had no intention of placing Austria in a position where she could register a casus belli at will. At this juncture, Napoleon said that he had the best inten-

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<sup>5</sup>Sybel, IV, 244 ff. cites Bismarck's complete report dated October 24. This report contains all the information on the negotiations with France.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 244, see footnote. This information was contained in a letter from Goltz dated October 23.

<sup>7</sup>Mowat, 188. See also Sybel, IV, 245.

tions to maintain the peace of Europe. Furthermore, he said that events should not be forced upon the world, but should be allowed to occur in the natural course of history. In other words, he did not want to take a definite step toward alliance until it was necessary.

"What are your views with regard to Holstein?" was Napoleon's next question. "We intend to annex it." Bismarck, however, expressed the willingness of Prussia to indemnify Austria for Holstein. Napoleon raised no objection to this and approved of Bismarck's remarks to Drouyn de Lhuys with regard to a possible gain for France. However, Bismarck was not satisfied to end his conversation at that point. He continued to the effect that the acquisition of the duchies would not be an increase in Prussian power, but that it would be a burden to the Prussian government, especially with regard to the defenses in the north and the increase in the navy that it would entail. However, this "would be only earnest-money (arrhes) for the fulfillment of the task, which history had laid upon the State of Prussia, and for the further prosecution of which we need to maintain friendly relations with France." He added that a "vigorous Prussia will naturally associate itself with France" and that France should be happy to encourage Prussia in her national growth.

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<sup>8</sup>Sybel, IV, 247, cites the report of Bismarck.

<sup>9</sup>Mowat, 189.

In another conversation Napoleon queried whether or not the Danubian principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia might not be used as compensation to Austria for the cession of Venetia to Italy. Napoleon was still interested in Venetia because he was a partisan of the development of Italy as a national state. Bismarck replied that the only interest that Prussia had in Wallachia and Moldavia was to avoid antagonizing Russia. In the latter manner, he managed with regard to the Venetian question to discourage the possibility of French support of Austria. Napoleon made other remarks concerning the duties of nations to prevent the spread of disease from the Near East to Europe. After these conversations the Emperor left Biarritz and returned to Paris, but Bismarck stayed.

On his return trip to Berlin in early November, 1865, Bismarck again talked with Napoleon. The discussions which had ensued at Biarritz were reviewed. Further, Napoleon requested that William be informed that he believed that Prussia and France should proceed in a cautious manner in the matter of their relations and that it would be wiser to await developments. (This, Bismarck said, was the result of his tone to the Emperor although Napoleon was not aware of this unconscious influence.) Napoleon added that as soon as circumstances seemed to demand a more formal agreement between the two powers the King should communicate with him. When this time came some definite agreement could be made. Napoleon also in-

formed Bismarck that any agreement between France and Austria was not possible, and that he had informed Metternich of this before the treaty of Gastein had been concluded. This information "showed with what reluctance Austria had entered into the Gastein compact, and what irregularities might be conceivable in its execution." Bismarck returned to Berlin on November 7, and he was very much encouraged by the success of these negotiations.

Probably one of the reasons why Napoleon acquiesced in Bismarck's plan was that he was interested in the development of national states. "The division of Europe into large national states was what was meant by Napoleonic ideas; he was willing to help in Germany a change such as that he had brought about in Italy."<sup>10</sup> There are conjectures as to whether Bismarck and Napoleon discussed possible territorial gains for France. Drouyn de Lhuys had circulated the report, so it is said, that Bismarck had promised all kinds of compensations to France. It is true that Napoleon, later on in life, also maintained that Bismarck had made such promises. One thing is certain that if any promises were made, they concerned the possible addition of the territory of French-speaking peoples and not Prussian or German territory.<sup>11</sup> Bismarck's success satisfied him and upon his return to Berlin he was able to

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<sup>10</sup>Headlam-Morley, 241.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 243.

leave Sarre Louis, Coblenz, Luxemburg, and Cologne with only a small portion of their artillery and with a small force of landwehr to guard them. This would have been impossible had<sup>12</sup> he not been convinced of the good intentions of France.

Napoleon, however, was not entirely convinced of the ability of the Prussian military forces to overcome those of Austria. It is quite possible that he intended to step in as arbiter when the two powers had exhausted themselves. No definite French alliance was ever concluded. But at a later date,<sup>13</sup> March 3, 1866 William wrote an autograph letter to Napoleon. This had been suggested by Napoleon. This letter stated that the proper time had arrived for an understanding. Goltz and Napoleon discussed the terms, and again Napoleon suggested the annexation of some German territory. To this Prussia answered that she would not permit such annexation. However, if France annexed part of Belgium, then the Prussian frontier must in-<sup>14</sup>clude the north-east of Belgium. And again, no alliance was made because Napoleon's neutrality seemed secure. The only object that Bismarck had in mind with regard to a possible alliance with France was to secure her neutrality.

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<sup>12</sup>Malet, 114.

<sup>13</sup>Sybel, IV, 324.

<sup>14</sup>Headlam-Morley, 248.



After Bismarck had heard from Napoleon that Austria had attempted to conclude an alliance with France, he decided to attempt to come to some understanding with Italy. However, while he was at Biarritz, the Italian government approached Austria. Since 1859 there had been no diplomatic relations between Austria and Italy so La Marmora, the Italian premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs, gave this difficult task to Count Malaguzzi of Modena. The Count was a patriotic Italian and at the same time a member of a noble family related to the royal family. His instructions were as follows:

he was to propose to the Austrian government the sale of Venetia (with Isonzo as boundary) for a thousand million lire, or four hundred million Austrian florins [or 40,000,000 pounds]. Italy would then in addition to the payment of the money, conclude an advantageous commercial treaty with Austria, and preserve a conciliatory conduct toward the Pope; but she would also on her part, desire a further secret understanding, which might lead her to hope, under certain conditions, for the acquisition of the Italian Tyrol.<sup>15</sup>

The Count remained in Vienna for nearly two months and during that time he made as many contacts as possible with members of the Ministry, of the Press, and of the commercial world. The industrial world, the politicians, and the Minister of Finance were in favor of such a treaty with Italy. The government deficit was increasing every month, and the benefits that would accrue from the addition of four hun-

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<sup>15</sup>Sybel, IV, 270.

dred million florins were desirable to the Minister of Finance. The opposition was constituted by the clergy, who were opposed to the Italian King, by the army, and by the Emperor. If a government loan had not been negotiated, perhaps, this alliance would have been concluded. However, Herr von Beeke, the agent of the chief of the department in the Ministry of Finance, who was Count Larish, negotiated a ninety million loan in silver at a high rate of interest. The Emperor refused to cede Venetia: "Schleswig shall be abandoned only in return for an indemnification in land and people! Venetia shall be ceded only after a war that has brought honor to Austrian arms!" At first the Italians thought that this declaration was a warlike one, but when the Italian government received Malaguzzi's reports it reversed its opinion. These reports seemed to indicate that Austria did not contemplate the overthrow of Italy, but that Austria would make no commercial treaty, nor cede Venetia as a matter of military honor. Consequently, on November 25, La Marmora in a circular note to the Italian embassies stated that no commercial relations with Austria could be engaged in without the introduction of the question of Venetia. In the same note he suggested that an improvement in trade across the frontier could be effected without diplomatic contrivances. Later, this was accomplished through the mediation of Drouyn de Lhuys.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 285-287.

But the rapprochement between Italy and Austria progressed no further. Instead Prussia seized the opportunity which Austria had neglected. Before Gastein Bismarck had suggested that a commercial treaty between Germany and Italy might be concluded. However, because of the opposition of Saxony and Bavaria, it was not concluded. After Gastein, it was a difficult question for these states to decide since Austria had adopted such a hostile attitude toward the Confederation. In December, therefore, after the type of treaty had been decided upon, Prussia and Bavaria asked the governments of the zollverein for their acceptances. All but Hanover accepted. By this action these German states recognized the new kingdom of Italy. At the beginning of January, 1866 Victor Emmanuel received the order of the Black Eagle from William.<sup>17</sup> The news of the conclusion of this commercial treaty was received with great bitterness in Vienna. As a consequence, there were renewed outbreaks of trouble in Schleswig-Holstein.<sup>18</sup> This commercial treaty was not the end of negotiations between Prussia and Italy. Relations between Austria and Prussia became steadily worse. On January 13, 1866 Bismarck wrote to Count Usedom in Florence. The substance of his remarks was: that since Austria had conducted affairs in the duchies contrary to the obligations incurred

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 288. See also Headlam-Morley, 245.

<sup>18</sup>For an account of the strained relations and the outbreaks in Schleswig-Holstein consult Chapter III.

by the treaty of Gastein, Prussia was free to resume her "natural relations with Italy." He also told Usedom that in the ultimate solution of the question between Austria and Prussia that Italy would necessarily have a part. Bismarck concluded his remarks by saying that if Italy did not join Prussia she (Prussia) would maintain the peace.<sup>19</sup>

Further inquiries were made at Florence, but no definite answer was received. After the famous Ministerial Council held in Berlin on February 28, plans were made to send Moltke on a mission to Florence. Meanwhile, both Italy and Prussia were anxious and distrustful of one another because "each feared that the other would use the alliance as a lever at Vienna, to get the Austrian government to make concessions without fighting."<sup>20</sup> However, Moltke's instructions were drawn up and were in final form by March 12, 1866. In order to keep Napoleon placated, the Prussians were careful to insist on the conditional character of the proposed treaty with Italy, that is, in case Prussia were attacked. In event of war the instructions provided that Prussia would obtain a position in North Germany according to the Imperial Constitution of 1849; that Italy would receive Venetia, but would not be permitted to take any Confederate territory, in Trieste, nor Tyrol. If Italy would not agree to this, then

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<sup>19</sup>Headlam-Morley, 246.

<sup>20</sup>Mowat, 156.

it would be best to conclude a simple treaty of friendship. Moltke was about to depart for Florence when word came that La Marmora was sending an Italian general to Berlin for the same purpose. Consequently, it was decided that it would be advisable for Moltke to remain in Berlin.

Previously on February 28, Nigra, the Italian Minister at Paris, had spoken with Napoleon. There had been a revolution in Bucharest on February 24, and this seemed like an opportunity to offer Austria the Danubian principalities in exchange for Venetia. Nigra approached Napoleon with this suggestion. But the latter had given his approval only on condition that the proposed Italo-Prussian alliance should be concluded. Consequently, Usedom, upon La Marmora's orders, sent a telegram to Bismarck stating that Italy intended to send an officer to Berlin, if this arrangement was agreeable. This telegram and one from Bismarck (telling of Moltke's mission to Florence) crossed in transit. The Italians thought that Bismarck's telegram was a response to the Italian telegram. General Govone, therefore, was summoned from Perugia to obtain his instructions. After Bismarck realized what had occurred he sent his consent to the mission of Govone.

La Marmora had no intention of concluding an alliance with Prussia. What he desired was to scare Austria with the possibility of such an alliance. In this way he hoped to force her to cede Venetia in return for Rumania. Govone,

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<sup>21</sup>Sybel, IV, 330-332.

therefore, according to his instructions was to sound out the Prussian sentiment with regard to contemplated military operations against Austria. If Prussia wanted an alliance for the declaration of war against Austria, then La Marmora hoped to be able to force Austria to cede Venetia to Italy.

Govone arrived in Berlin on March 14, ostensibly to study<sup>22</sup> the system of fortifications. Together with Count Barral, the Italian Minister to Berlin, he visited Bismarck. Govone told Bismarck that the purpose of Italy in subscribing to this proposed alliance was to effect a solution in the Venetian question. If such a basis could be found, then he would discuss the military arrangements which would be necessary between the two powers. To this Bismarck replied:

that the Holstein question which was at issue between Prussia and Austria was not sufficient to warrant a declaration of war; and that therefore Prussia intended to lay at the basis of her future action the national question of the reform of the German Confederation; that in the desirable promulgation of these doctrines several months would still necessarily be consumed; and that in order to have a safer basis to work upon, Prussia proposed a treaty to the Italian Government, in which Italy should engage to declare war against Austria so soon as Prussia should take up arms in the cause of Confederate reform.<sup>23</sup>

This, however, served to reenforce the suspicions of the Italians against Prussia, but Govone decided to stay in Berlin and perhaps conclude a treaty of friendship. But, at

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<sup>22</sup>Mowat, 156.

<sup>23</sup>Sybel, IV, 337.

this time there arrived in Italy, news of the disapproval of England, Russia, and Austria to the proposed exchange of Rumania to Austria, for the cession of Venetia to Italy. Secondly, affairs between Austria and Prussia had increased the probability of war. In view of these two facts, it was decided to accept Bismarck's plan, but to limit its binding force to three months.<sup>24</sup> On April 8, after several conferences to obviate the difficulties, an offensive and defensive alliance between Prussia and Italy was signed,<sup>25</sup> and a week later it was ratified. Bismarck had succeeded not only in securing an alliance with Italy, but by virtue of this alliance he had prevented a hostile attack by Napoleon because the latter, as the protector of Italy, would not fight Prussia as long as she was allied with Italy.

It can be observed that the relations of the four powers, France, Italy, Austria, and Prussia with regard to alliances depended upon Venetia.<sup>26</sup> Italy would not be secure until she obtained Venetia; Napoleon, as the protector of Italy and in order to redeem his promises, wished to prevent a reconciliation between Austria and Prussia; Bismarck was anxious to prevent the cession by Austria of Venetia so that Austria would be unable to obtain French or Italian support; finally, Aus-

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<sup>24</sup>Ward, 216.

<sup>25</sup>See Appendix C.

<sup>26</sup>Headlam-Morley, 243-245.

tria refused to cede Venetia unless she was guaranteed compensation in Silesia, but this William would not do. It may be said that if Austria had ceded Venetia, the war of 1866 might not have been fought. Belcredi, the Emperor, Esterhazy, and the Archduchess Sophie opposed the cession of Venetia.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Clark, 307.



### CHAPTER III LEADING TO WAR

According to the treaty of Gastein, the administration of Holstein by Austria and of Schleswig by Prussia began on September 15. Both Manteuffel and Gablenz published proclamations<sup>1</sup> on this date. Manteuffel had visited both duchies shortly after the conclusion of the treaty. After he assumed his duties of governor of Schleswig he had some trouble with the government in Berlin concerning the appointment of officials and appropriations of money. In several speeches to the people he had mentioned the possibility of the cession of Schleswig to Prussia; by some he was praised for this, by others censured. However, it was generally agreed that Manteuffel was a strong and honest man.

When Gablenz began his administration of Holstein, he regulated his actions according to the strict orders that he had received from Vienna. "The instructions given to the new Statthalter revealed the desire of the Austrian government to preserve its 'pawn'--Holstein--from 'deterioration,' so that it could later be handed over either to Prussia or to the Diet, according to circumstances at the proper time." He was further instructed to conduct himself differently than Halhuber had. Thirdly, he was to treat Augustenburg as a private citizen.<sup>2</sup> The relations between the two governors were

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix D.

<sup>2</sup>Clark, 315-316.

quite friendly, and it seemed that affairs in the duchies would proceed quietly and amicably. On October 14, the Prince of Augustenburg visited his cousin near Eckernförde in Schleswig. His arrival was known beforehand, and acts of homage were paid him both on his arrival and his departure. Mantouffell protested this action to Gablenz, and the Prussian government protested it to the government at Vienna. The protest of Prussia asked that the Prince should be forbidden to accept such demonstrations even in Holstein. This request was granted by the Austrian government, and Mensdorff communicated with Gablenz. The communication ordered Gablenz not to tolerate any such demonstrations. In general, however, during the autumn of 1865 friendly relations were maintained between the two governors and the two governments.

However, in the beginning of October the opinion of the crown lawyers in connection with the question of succession<sup>3</sup> in the duchies was published. This decision is supposed never to have been communicated to Austria. It was at this same time, October, 1865, that Bismarck was visiting in Biarritz,<sup>4</sup> but he returned to Berlin in November full of new schemes against Austria and plans to gain the duchies. He

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<sup>3</sup>Malet, 122. See also, Sir Henry Montague Hozier, The Seven Weeks' War. London: Macmillan and Company, 1867, I, 19. Sybel makes no mention of the publication of the report. On pages 158-165, he gives the contents of it.

<sup>4</sup>See pages 37-44.

gave carte-blanche to the Prussian press to retaliate against the Austrian press. To Chotek, the Austrian charge at Berlin, he said: "There cannot exist between Austria and Prussia a half-relationship. Either sincere alliance<sup>5</sup> or war to the knife."

Meanwhile in the duchies the Augustenburg agitation had increased, especially in Holstein, and propaganda began to reappear. Manteuffel took measures to prohibit the sale of newspapers in Schleswig that were friendly to Augustenburg. On December 6, he wrote to Bismarck stating that the condition of affairs in Holstein was similar to that existing<sup>6</sup> before Gastein. The attitude of Gablenz had changed, and in many instances he made declarations hostile to Prussia. The Princess Frederick, the wife of the Hereditary Prince, journeyed from Altona to Kiel, and along the way she was greeted with royal honors. All these and similar occurrences in Holstein seemed to indicate that the pre-Gastein situation had returned. Manteuffel began to lose patience. On December 14, he dined with Gablenz. A long interview between Manteuffel, Gablenz, and Hofmann ensued. Gablenz and Hofmann told Manteuffel that Austria would guard her position in Holstein in order to protect her place in German affairs which place Prussia was trying to usurp.

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<sup>5</sup>Clark, 324.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 316-320. Clark states that there was no change, but that Gablenz had followed his instructions and that the Austrian policy of neutrality had been explained to Prussia.

After the incidents concerned with the journey of the Princess, Manteuffel sent a protest to Gablenz. The latter replied that even at the moment he was inquiring of the Vienna government if it was permissible for him to inform the Prussian government of the administrative measures enforced in Holstein. After this reply, Manteuffel reported to Bismarck that it seemed advisable to question Vienna whether or not that government would break with Prussia or with Augustenburg. Accordingly, Werther, the Prussian Minister at Vienna, was instructed on December 29, 1865 to question Mensdorff. The instructions said that he was to point out

how very contradictory it was to the agreements of Salzburg and Gastein to permit such demonstrations, and to suffer them to go unpunished; that the administration of the Duchies was divided, but the sovereignty was held in common as before; that each of the two Powers was, in the Duchy intrusted to her, the depositary of the other's rights; that therefore Prussia was justified in demanding that Austria should in Holstein prove herself worthy of the confidence placed in her at Salzburg and Gastein, and should now, after two ineffectual warnings, make the Hereditary Prince feel that she, as well as Prussia, was determined to support the common rights?<sup>7</sup>

Before these instructions reached Werther, Bismarck on December 31, received his answer from Hofmann who was returning to Holstein from Vienna by way of Berlin. Hofmann reiterated what he and Gablenz had told Manteuffel, namely,

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<sup>7</sup>Sybel, IV, 294.

that the laws of 1854 had been abrogated and that Augustenburg bore the title of Duke rightfully. He also said that if Prussia complained of the Augustenburg agitation in the newspapers that Austria could as justly oppose the journals in Schleswig that were agitating for annexation to Prussia. However, he did state that Austria had no desire to cause friction between Prussia and herself, but that a common policy would be the only one that would lead to any mutual understanding.

With the new year, Gablenz received instructions similar to those he had received in September. On January 3, Bismarck received a communication from Werther stating that Mensdorff had expressed his desire for amicable relations, that concerning the Constitution of 1854 he was not quite sure, but that he (Mensdorff) wished that Prussia would be more sympathetic with the occurrences in the duchies. However, in spite of this friendly attitude Manteuffel had been urging Bismarck to demand the removal of Augustenburg because he felt that was the only way in which a satisfactory solution could be effected. On January 18, he wrote to this effect to Bismarck. But previous, Bismarck had already started such negotiations. On January 13, he had written to Usedom concerning the Italian alliance. In this letter he mentioned the intentions of Prussia in connection with the new conditions in Germany.

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<sup>8</sup>The Constitution of 1854 which had been annulled by the Confederate commissioners in 1864.

Meanwhile in Holstein, the popularity of the Augustenburg caused more demonstrations in his favor. The climax of these was reached on January 23. The Austrian government had been informed of a project to assemble the delegates of the Holstein and Schleswig associations. The Vienna cabinet issued a note of warning, but it was assured that any "agitating questions" would not be discussed. Consequently, the Austrian government did not forbid the Assembly.<sup>9</sup> This mass-meeting at which four thousand people were present was held on January 23 at Altona. In keeping with the promises to the Austrian government, no resolutions were passed, but there were loud clamorings in favor of Augustenburg, and expressions of favor concerning the possible convocation of the assembly of the Estates. By permitting this meeting to take place, Gablenz was guilty of an error of judgment. Bismarck himself was not concerned particularly because he could see no disastrous effects. However, he did not overlook this opportunity to lodge another complaint at Vienna.<sup>10</sup> This complaint was presented on January 26 in a letter to Werther. The general tenor of the despatch was as follows: that the two powers had fought against revolutionary tendencies in the past and it was ill-befitting that Austria should support such measures against Prussia. Austria

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<sup>9</sup>Malet, 123.

<sup>10</sup>Clark, 327. See also Sybel, IV, 304, wherein he states that there was a great deal of apprehension in Prussia. I am inclined to believe Clark.

was asked to put an end to these events in Holstein and to reply in a positive fashion to Prussia. This answer would assist Prussia in determining her policy. Whether or not it was to be one of freedom from that of Austria would depend upon this answer. The points covered in this despatch were not new to Mensdorff, save one, "the solemn and official request for an answer quite as official and as definitive, as to whether Austria would choose to renounce her support of Augustenburg or her friendly alliance with Prussia."

The Austrians realized the seriousness of this note. Mensdorff expressed his disapproval of the Altona meeting, and he had already sent a reproof to Gablenz for permitting it. At the same time, however, he maintained that Austria could not interfere with the freedom of the press in Holstein, and secondly, that both powers had agreed to recognize Augustenburg by the motion of May 28, 1864.<sup>11</sup> These were his unofficial words; but they became the basis for the official Austrian reply which was dated February 7, 1866.

Without adducing any proofs, it was denied that the agitation in Holstein had a revolutionary character--an assertion that could not, indeed, be gainsaid, if Austria seconded the deductions of Beust and Pfordten concerning Augustenburg, which, however, would mean that she cut loose from the basis of the Vienna and the Gastein treaties. 'Prussia,' it was said in the reply, 'has, in making her complaints about the Altona meeting, evidently forgotten that it was her own Government that once rejected the proposal of Austria to bring forward in the Confederation a motion prohib-

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<sup>11</sup> Declaration made in common at the London Conference.

iting all such meetings throughout Germany. Austria recognizes her duty of preserving uninjured the pledge that has been intrusted to her care, but can understand this duty only upon its own promptings, and it considers every single question that may come up within the range of its administration as a question arising solely between itself and its Statthalter, and in every way removed from the reach of foreign interference. The same independence is also recognized and conceded to the Royal Prussian Government in Schleswig. . . .

'Count Mensdorff has, without doubt, the right to confide to his friend Baron von Werther, what the Government of the Emperor thinks about the authorization of that Altona meeting, to which, moreover, the Court of Berlin seems to attach altogether too much importance. But the Minister of the Emperor must decidedly refuse to recognize the claim of the Royal Prussian Ambassador to any justification of an act that concerned the administration of Holstein. When I give utterance to these sentiments, I am but following the commands of my Imperial Master.'<sup>12</sup>

This reply seems to have been given for the benefit of the public because Karolyi, in a private conversation, and under orders from Mensdorff apologized for this meeting at Altona.

Austria, however, had adopted a firm stand and could not retract.<sup>13</sup> Bismarck made no official reply to the Austrian note of February 7, but at a meeting with Karolyi he remarked that

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<sup>12</sup>Sybel, IV, 308-309, cites Mensdorff's note. See also Malet, 128-129 for a good summary of it. Hozier, 21 has erred in the date of the note.

<sup>13</sup>Clark, 334-336, mentions this private apology. Sybel, IV, 309, mentions the meeting with Karolyi but does not allude to any apology.



the relations of Austria and Prussia had lost their intimate character. In other words in accordance with his note of January 26 addressed to Austria, "that convinced of the impossibility of longer acting with Austria, Prussia resumed her liberty of action, and would only consult her own interests."<sup>14</sup> These notes definitely mark the end of the Austro-Prussian alliance, and the beginning of hostilities which eventually lead to the war of 1866. Also, any further altercations or negotiations between Austria and Prussia with regard to the duchies were linked with the broader question of war and reform of the Confederation. The question of the duchies was no longer considered exclusively.

Bismarck spoke of the imminence of war to those people who would be sure to spread this rumor in Austria. He also fostered agitations and outbursts of indignation in the Prussian newspapers.<sup>15</sup> How did Austria react to the recurrence of the pre-Gastein relations? The Emperor had determined to yield no further, and for four reasons: first, public opinion favored Austria's stand; secondly, the policy of Bismarck itself; thirdly, the improvement in Austria's internal affairs and in her international position; fourth, the influence exerted by the military and Court circles in Vienna. It was

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<sup>14</sup>Malet, 130.

<sup>15</sup>Clark, 336.

at this time that he turned a deaf ear to the plans for a  
<sup>16</sup>  
rapprochement with Italy.

In Vienna on February 21 a Council was held to determine what policy Austria should adopt in view of these new developments, namely, the situation created by the exchange of notes. "To the menaces of Monsieur de Bismarck, the Emperor and his Council had decided to reply, not with armaments [at least, not immediately] nor yet with concessions, but by showing their teeth to Prussia and bestowing their glances on the Mittel-  
<sup>17</sup>  
staaten." And again, at this Council the Emperor refused to cede Venetia and thus gain Italy as an ally. Esterhazy and Belcredi urged the rapprochement with the secondary states. This, however, had already begun. On February 11, Mensdorff had instructed Blome at Munich to discover confidentially if the guess of Bismarck with regard to Bavaria was correct, namely, that she would stall off entering the war until she could determine which was the winning side and then she would ally herself with that side. This conjecture seemed to be a correct one. On the other hand, Saxony, under the leadership of Beust,  
<sup>18</sup>  
was in favor of strong measures to be adopted by the Diet.

Meanwhile in Prussia, Bismarck was contemplating the possibilities of a reform in the Confederation. This idea had been in his mind for a number of years, but it was necessary to

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 328-332. See also pages 45-47.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 339-340.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

to attack the solution of this question with caution. He realized that in order to accomplish this reform, a war would be necessary. On this point he had to meet the opposition of the King who would not go to war on a small pretext, but his reasons for adopting a warlike policy would have to be sound and well established. By family and by sentiment he was drawn toward Austria and away from Napoleon. Consequently, Bismarck proceeded in a judicious manner in order to lead William into a frame of mind which was favorable to war.

In the early part of February Bismarck instructed Prince Reuss to communicate to Pfordten the Prussian messages of January 20<sup>19</sup> and January 26 that had been sent to Austria. Pfordten replied favorably to Prussia's attitude as it was indicated in these despatches. On February 27 in his conversation with Pfordten, Reuss brought up the question of Federal reform. The latter agreed that Prussia was entitled to an increase in power. He also said that the voting power of the Diet as it existed then was a mistake and that the apportionment of votes should be based on the actual power of the members. With regard to Schleswig-Holstein he said he could not answer definitely until he could determine the motive for Austria's attitude. "If she opposed the Prussian Court for the

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<sup>19</sup>On January 20, Bismarck had reviewed the situation in Holstein in a letter to Werther. He wished to suppress the secret societies and the press.

sake of Augustenburg, then she was right. If she wished only to hinder the Prussian annexation, she ought not to expect others to join her." If it came to a decision, he would prefer Prussian annexation to any other course, so he said. While these events were in progress, the question of Venetia and the possibilities of alliances were discussed in France, Prussia, Austria, and Italy.

In February the negotiations for alliances that Prussia had been conducting did not seem favorable to her so a full Ministerial Council was called for February 28 to discuss the situation. The King presided at the Council which was attended by the Crown Prince, Bismarck, Goltz, Manteuffel, Moltke, and others. The meeting was opened by the King who made a short speech saying that the affairs in Holstein were only one indication of Austria's intention to keep Prussia in second position if she could. He further remarked that "the possession of the Duchies is the national desire of all Prussia. That a war was to come was certain, but Prussia would have to be careful not to provoke the war herself. Bismarck gave the historical background of the diplomatic conflict with Austria and concluded his remarks by saying that the rupture had already been effected by his remarks to Karolyi upon receipt of the Austrian note of February 7. Most of the ministers favored Bismarck and his plans. Goltz reported on Napoleon's favorable attitude, and Moltke reported on the military

status of Prussia. The Crown Prince gave a dissenting opinion. He had never favored any but amicable relations between the two German powers, and said: "The war, with Austria is a war between brothers; and the interference of the Foreign Powers is certain." The decision, however, was in the hands of the King. He said that the possession of the duchies was sufficient cause for a war, but that if the question could be settled peacefully it would be wise.

The decision, whether it shall be war or peace, depends therefore, upon Austria's further conduct. On the part of Prussia, diplomatic negotiations alone can for the present be undertaken, in order to secure for her the most favorable chances in the event of war.<sup>20</sup>

The King was also of the opinion that the question of the duchies was bound up with the question of the reforms in the Confederation. One of the results of this Council was the renewal of efforts to make alliances with France and Italy. It was at this time that the King sent his autograph letter to Napoleon, and that Moltke's instructions for his mission to Italy were framed.

Karolyi in his reports to Vienna indicated the hostile attitude which was manifest in Berlin. These reports alarmed Mensdorff. The feeling in Vienna against Prussia was also rising every day, and Mensdorff was finding it more difficult to deal with the militarists. When news came that Prussia

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<sup>20</sup>Sybel, IV, 323.

had called out the militia the Austrians feared that war was at hand. This, however, was not an extraordinary event, but nevertheless, the Austrians were alarmed. On March 2, orders were sent to six cavalry regiments and six batteries to be prepared for action.

A Council of war was held in Vienna between March 7 and <sup>21</sup> March 13. The entire military situation was discussed. The extent of the strength of Austria was compared with that of <sup>22</sup> Prussia, and was found to be superior. Austria, as well as Prussia, wished to ally the question of the duchies with the question of the reform of the Confederation. At this time Beust sent news to Vienna of Bismarck's retort to Countess Hohenthal when she asked if it were true that he wished to <sup>23</sup> fight Austria and thus conquer Saxony. After this Council, Austria's preparations were pushed, but secretly. This was an unfortunate move for Austria because as soon as she did this she was committed to war and to Bismarck. Prussia's military machine was much better organized; could mobilize more quickly; and Bismarck could always maintain that it was Austria who

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<sup>21</sup>Hozier, 25, says March 10.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 26. Sybel makes no mention of these miscalculations of the Austrian Council.

<sup>23</sup>Sybel, IV, 344-345, has the best account of this incident, but it is mentioned in all references.

had started to prepare.

Events occurred in rapid succession. On March 3 Karolyi presented at Berlin a statement from Austria to the effect that Austria would not permit her position in the provisional government to be jeopardized, nor her position in the Confederation. Similar statements were presented to the governments of France and England.

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However, during all these plans for war, Mensdorff who favored peace had decided on a peace offensive. It consisted of two parts: first, that a dualism between the two powers should be established in the Confederation; and secondly, it provided for a German national movement, or to be more definite, the question of the duchies and the question of the reform of the Confederation were to be linked together. Stated differently, his plan was to wage a peace campaign against Bismarck, and if this failed, to wage a diplomatic war by taking the Schleswig-Holstein question to the Federal Diet, and finally to make an alliance with "l'infame" in Paris. He wished to conduct his peace offensive in such a way that it would be "'impossible for Bismarck to register a casus belli.'" In this manner Mensdorff hoped not only to avoid war, but to make it impossible for Bismarck to remain

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<sup>24</sup>Headlam-Morley, 247.

<sup>25</sup>Malet, 130.

in office.

As part of his peace procedure he offered on March 3, to reopen negotiations with regard to Schleswig-Holstein. On March 15, he is supposed to have stated that the duchies should be independent under Prussian influence, and that the Grand Duke of Oldenburg was an acceptable candidate. Again on March 27, he said to Gramont, the French Minister in Vienna that

'he cared little what accession of territory Prussia gained outside of Germany; and that he would consent to annexation of Schleswig if absolutely necessary to avoid war, but Holstein must be independent in the Confederation.'

These peaceful advances, however, were too late.

While Mensdorff was making his peaceful advances to restore harmony, a decree in the name of the king of Prussia was issued on March 11. This decree may be regarded as a reply to Karolyi's communication of March 3. It provided for the punishment by imprisonment "with hard labour for any attempt within the Schleswig-Holstein territory, calculated to impair his own William's or the Emperor of Austria's sovereign rights." The implications in this decree were meaningful because Prussia, according to the treaty of Gastein, had no

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<sup>26</sup>Clark, 349-354. This plan was not original with Mensdorff but seems to have been suggested in 1864 by others. This was the only reference to these plans that were found in my research, but this work has authority and was written from Austrian state documents.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 358. There is no mention of these proposals in the books which favor Prussia.

<sup>28</sup>Malet, 130-131.



right to interfere in Holstein. When she did this, she showed her disregard for this treaty. <sup>29</sup> Naturally, this caused alarm in Vienna. Consequently, Mensdorff instructed Karolyi to make an interpellation at Berlin, whether Prussia intended to break the Gastein convention and to disturb the peace. Bismarck replied: "No." In answer to a question about Prussia's preparations for war, Bismarck answered that she was conducting no such preparations. To which Karolyi answered that the Austrian preparations were merely for defense and protection. The sending of troops into Bohemia, and this interpellation of Bismarck are regarded as examples of precipitate action by Austria. The second was foolhardy because Bismarck could hardly have answered affirmatively.

On March 16, the same day that he had sent instructions to Karolyi, Mensdorff sent a secret circular despatch to all the German governments. The purpose of this circular was to state what would be done if Bismarck's reply was unsatisfactory. According to this despatch, the Diet was to be called to make a decision with regard to Schleswig-Holstein. If Prussia opposed this, then the Confederate army with the exception of the Prussian contingents was to be mobilized. However, when Bismarck replied so emphatically to Karolyi, the need for the despatch was unfounded. Therefore, on March 18, Mensdorff telegraphed the secondary states that the Prussian answer had been satisfactory. The despatch of March 16 and the telegram

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<sup>29</sup>Sybel, IV, 348.

of March 18 had been sent to the following capitals of states: Munich in Bavaria, Dresden in Saxony, Hanover, Stuttgart in<sup>30</sup> Würtemberg, Karlsruhe in Baden, Cassel, and Darmstadt.

The possibility of war was imminent, but still William was opposed. The Absolutist party headed by the Dowager queen was also against it. In Austria, the Emperor had just refused to cede Venetia for one million lire. And, to increase the war scare in Austria, Karolyi had informed his<sup>31</sup> government that he considered war inevitable. On March 24, the Prussian government sent a circular despatch to all the German governments. Bismarck protested the movements of the Austrian army and said that it was necessary for Prussia to protect herself. He asked if the assistance of the members of the Confederation could be guaranteed in case Prussia would be attacked. At this time he made his first announcement of<sup>32</sup> his proposal for a reformed Confederation. Moltke states in a confidential note dated March 24 that this despatch sent by Bismarck was a pretext. He declared that all the Austrian preparations had been defensive and not offensive at least up

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<sup>30</sup>Clark, 370, corrects Sybel, IV, 350. Sybel states that Mensdorff countermanded the presentation of the despatch but Clark says he did not, nor did these states warn Austria but instead sent warnings to Berlin.

<sup>31</sup>Malet, 138.

<sup>32</sup>See Appendix E.

to that date. Thus both powers had addressed notes to the other states indicating what might be expected if a peaceful solution were not found.

A Ministerial Council was held in Berlin on March 27 and the King presided. As a result on March 28 and 29 decrees were issued for military reenforcements. In particular it was decided to arm the Silesian and Elbe fortresses.<sup>34</sup> Meanwhile, the Italian envoys had observed these events and the treaty with Italy was signed on April 8.

The movement for a reform in the Confederation had been in Bismarck's mind for some time. His announcement of it on March 24 was a result of long deliberations. As early as February 14, he had broached the subject to Pfordten. The latter had maintained an attitude of friendliness to Prussia for some time, and Bismarck encouraged the friendly relations between the two states. On March 8, Reuss told Pfordten that Prussia was contemplating a revision of the Constitution of the Confederation and that Prussia intended to move to summon a German parliament which should be composed of members elected directly by the people. Pfordten asserted that he was

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<sup>33</sup>Headlam-Morley, 249.

<sup>34</sup>Sybel, IV, 351. Other provisions were "to purchase horses for half of the Prussian field-artillery, and to increase seventy-five battalions, each from 530 to 685 men (their full war-footing would have been 1002). The increase of the force by this means amounted to 11,000 men, which was almost exactly the same number that the Austrian provinces on the frontier had received by the changes that had been made."

friendly to this, but said that Prussia would have to come to some understanding with Austria. Bismarck, however, had plans to offer Bavaria the military supremacy of the south German states. In this way he hoped to destroy any Austrian sentiments that might be harbored by Pfordten. The circular of March 24 when it was sent to Bavaria was accompanied by a lengthy explanation of the new parliamentary system which Bismarck desired to initiate.<sup>35</sup>

Austria, on the other hand, had not been idle with regard to the German states. Mensdorff, as part of his peace offensive, wanted Bavaria and Saxony jointly to make a motion in the Diet to preserve peace. Pfordten was asked to take the initiative, but he refused because his connections with Prussia were too friendly. Secondly he was busy with his own peace plans.<sup>36</sup> To Pfordten his most important task was to gain safety, influence, and prestige for Bavaria. In order to do this, therefore, it was necessary that the rivalry between the two powers should be sustained but that this rivalry should be kept within peaceful limits. Consequently, for the sake of the state which he served, if for no other reason,<sup>37</sup> Pfordten was sincere in his efforts to preserve peace.

When the Schleswig-Holstein question had come to the fore,

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 360-363.

<sup>36</sup>Clark, 370.

<sup>37</sup>Sybel, IV, 364.

he had vacillated in his policy, but finally he had decided that the cause of the trouble was Austria's attitude. He believed that aside from Augustenburg's rights, the best solution of the question would be found in the annexation of the duchies by Prussia. Austria, he declared, opposed this in order to reap advantages for herself. He became convinced that war between the two powers was almost inevitable, and if that war came, it would mean the destruction of the Confederation. This he wished to avoid. As a result of his wish to maintain the Confederation, he began to outline a plan for the reorganization of the Confederation. Pfordten was supported in this policy by the Bavarian King Ludwig. This plan provided for a three-fold division of the Confederation, with Austria remaining in the Bund.<sup>38</sup> This was his reply to Bismarck's circular despatch of March 24.

Previously, on March 26, Pfordten had surprised Blome with the following proposal which was to serve as a basis of his mediation between the two powers.

'Prussia to accept Augustenburg and a modification of the February demands, Austria to allow a new allotment of voting power in the Diet in accord with Prussia's actual strength, and to permit Prussia to exercise a preponderant influence in North Germany.'<sup>39</sup>

This proposal, however, was never given any serious consideration by either power.

<sup>38</sup>Mowat, 190, says that this plan had great possibilities, if Prussia had accepted it.

<sup>39</sup>Clark, 371, cites letter to Mensdorff, dated March 26.

Meanwhile, Austria was criticized for her troop movements in the north. Therefore, in order to maintain her position as desiring peace, a very vigorous peace campaign supplemented the diplomatic campaign. This plan had three parts: first, to challenge Prussia to announce that her intentions were peaceful and to give an explanation of her preparations; secondly, to continue to seek alliances; thirdly, to weaken the position of Bismarck.

The first of these was carried into effect on March 31. Mensdorff instructed Karolyi to address a note to the Prussian government in which Austria disclaimed hostile intentions and in which the Emperor refused to put himself in a position of opposition to Article XI of the Act of Confederation.<sup>40</sup> This same note ended with a request that Prussia would declare her intentions to preserve peace. As a consequence of this note,<sup>41</sup> a series of notes between the two governments ensued with the result that they agreed to recall their military forces.<sup>42</sup> The Prussian reply, dated April 6, was equivalent to a request for an explanation of Austria's military preparations

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<sup>40</sup>See Appendix H.

<sup>41</sup>Sybel, IV, 384-389, gives a detailed description of each note. Clark, 375, mentions subsequent notes in footnotes.

<sup>42</sup>Letter from William to Bismarck, April 3, saying that proposed reply to Austria is too brusque. Letter of Bismarck to William, April 3, saying that it would not be advisable to modify the proposed reply.

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in Bohemia. The other Prussian notes bear the dates of April 15 and 21, while the Austrian notes are dated April 7 and 18. The crucial note was the reply of Prussia on April 21<sup>44</sup> in which that government engaged to reduce her army by the extent to which it had been increased by the orders of March 29. This was to be done as soon as Austria withdrew her troops from the north, and would be done in proportion to the Austrian reduction in war equipment. The latter was to use her influence on the secondary states to stop their military preparations.

The second part of Mensdorff's vigorous peace campaign, namely, to secure alliances has been discussed elsewhere.<sup>45</sup> But the third part is very interesting, and if it had succeeded, its effects would have been far-reaching. This provided for the weakening of Bismarck's position and was designed to drive him from office. It is known as the Coburg Intrigue.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>It is well to remember that the treaty with Italy was signed on April 8.

Malet, 160, has the dates of these events in March rather than in April. Seems to have been a printer's error.

<sup>44</sup>See page 76. Letter of William to Bismarck, April 20, stating that Austrian plan was to be accepted.

<sup>45</sup>See Chapters II and IV, passim.

<sup>46</sup>Clark, 375-379, gives a complete description of this plot.

The plan was to hold Bismarck personally responsible for misleading the King into a warlike policy against Austria, 'which no true German desired, as it would simply play into the hands of France.' The King was to be urged to drop Bismarck and appoint a more liberal minister. In essence, it was simply the culmination of the struggle which had been going on for years at the Prussian Court, between the Crown Prince's faction and the Bismarck faction.

All the people in Prussia who were friendly to Austria, either by kinship or merely because of their opposition to Bismarck

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were employed to effect this plan. Even Queen Victoria wrote letters to the Dowager queen of Prussia supporting this move.

These influences which had been inaugurated in Vienna were assisted by the illness of Bismarck. This illness probably

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was caused by his worries about the success of his plans.

Mensdorff's plans seemed to be successful, and when Prussia accepted the proposal for mutual disarmament the designs for war seemed to have been forestalled. At this juncture, however, occurred the death-knell of Mensdorff's peace offensive

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when the Emperor gave the order to mobilize against Italy.

A favorable reply to Austria's offer of prior disarmament was being drafted in Berlin. Karolyi telegraphed this news to Mensdorff, but the telegram arrived a few hours after the

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<sup>47</sup>Letters of William and Bismarck dated April 3, 4, 7, and 8 refer to this plot against Bismarck. These letters indicate that Duke Ernest II of Coburg-Gotha was implicated.

<sup>48</sup>Headlam-Morley, 249.

<sup>49</sup>The reasons for this will be found in Chapter IV.



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mobilization orders had been sent.

While Mensdorff pushed forward his peace campaign, Bismarck pushed forward his plans for reform in the Confederation. In spite of Pfordten's counter proposition, Bismarck hoped to win his support. On April 4, Savigny, the Prussian representative at Frankfort, received his preliminary instructions. On April 9, he presented the motion to the Diet.

'The Diet will within a period to be precisely fixed decree the convocation of a National Assembly to be elected by universal and direct suffrage, for the purpose of receiving and deliberating on the proposals of the German Governments for the reform of the Confederation. The Governments, however, must meanwhile, and until the said Assembly comes together, determine on these proposals by mutual understanding.'<sup>51</sup>

Needless to say, this motion was received with surprise and apprehension. Bismarck the reactionary, had now turned to liberalism. As part of his absolutist program he had denied the rights of Augustenburg, and had denied the right of the people of Schleswig-Holstein to decide this matter. Austria, while more absolute than Prussia had defended Augustenburg and the duchies. "A popular assembly in Hanover declared it to be an accursed enterprise to use Confederate reform as a pretext for beginning a fratricidal war." Everywhere the

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<sup>50</sup>Clark, 387. Telegram from Karolyi to Mensdorff arrived at 6 P.M.

<sup>51</sup>Malet, 161-162, cites this motion.

motion was received with condemnation. Even foreign powers expressed their disapproval. But Bismarck remained undaunted. The question which had been raised by the motion April 9, was, on April 21, referred to a committee of nine members. At the same time it was decided to request the Prussian government for details and explanations as to the object and extent of these reforms. The election of the committee took place on April 26. On April 27, Bismarck replied to the request, saying

'the determination of the period of the opening of the Parliament was to be regarded as the essence of the proposition, and that he could put no reliance on the Governments coming to an agreement as to the text and terms of their proposals, unless that preliminary determination was taken as a self-imposed necessity.

'If this question was put aside, all serious consideration of Dietal reform became impossible; he would however indicate in the deliberations of the Committee, to what regions of political life the Prussian proposals would extend.'<sup>53</sup>

Savigny was then called to Berlin to participate in the discussions of the proposals for Confederate reform.

Thus by April 27, 1866 Prussia had prepared the way for her proposed reforms of the Confederation. These reforms were connected with the Schleswig-Holstein question. Austria by April 21 had committed herself to war by the mobilization orders against Italy.

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<sup>52</sup>Sybel, IV, 370-373. See also, Headlam-Morley, 253-254.

<sup>53</sup>Malet, 162-163, cites Bismarck's reply of April 27.

## CHAPTER IV WAR COMES

The events described in the last chapter indicated that war between Prussia and Austria was inevitable, but the moment that it was to be declared might be within a few weeks or months. When Austria mobilized against Italy, the first direct step had been taken. Why did the Emperor sign the mobilization order? Up to that time Austria's peace offensive seemed to be successful but Mensdorff was the only one, who at this time, hoped for peace. His colleagues in the ministry were not favorable to his peace plans. While he was working for peace and trying to dissuade the Emperor from making further military preparations, word kept coming to Austria concerning the military preparations of Italy. Belcredi, the president of the ministry in Vienna, was anxious for war. Therefore, when a letter from the Director of Police in Venice informed Belcredi that the Italians were concentrating 49,000 men at Bologna and that an Italian general was engaged in obtaining horses, he thought he could use this information to get action. It should be noted, however, that this action of the Italians was already known to the Intelligence service of Austria.<sup>1</sup> A Council was called on April 22, the day after the order for mobilization, but neither Mensdorff nor Esterhazy was present, both men being ill. Without these peace advocates the result was a foregone conclusion, namely, that further

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<sup>1</sup>Clark, 381.

military preparations would be endorsed. The reason for this move was that Austria was afraid. Lord Bloomfield, the English Ambassador at Vienna said: "The Austrians are driven wild by the danger of their position."<sup>2</sup> It was the consensus of opinion in the European courts that Bismarck was responsible for the arming of Italy as a move to ruin the disarmament scheme before it could be effected.<sup>3</sup> It may be noted here that neither government had taken any steps to disarm.

The Austrian southern army was mobilized, and part of the northern army withdrawn from Bohemia. This was done in order to withstand a supposed attack by Garibaldi's men. This was only a rumor, but the harm had already been done. Secondly, "the threatened march of troops toward the Venetian frontier consisted of only twelve squadrons of cavalry which had been sent down to Naples against the brigands two years before; and as they proved unserviceable for this purpose, their return to their former garrisons had already been decided upon some time previous to this."<sup>4</sup> The English Ambassador at Florence, and the Russian and French chargés d'affaires all testified to their home governments that these moves by the

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 386, cites Bloomfield's note to Clarendon, April 26.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 387.

<sup>4</sup>Sybel, IV, 393.

Italians were harmless. Austria, however, once she started to arm could not revoke her actions. Consequently, she had to arm further. Prussia warned Austria that she could not be indifferent to an attack on Italy. Prussia did not believe that the northern army of Austria would be reduced so she took steps to counteract this.<sup>5</sup> By April 26, the Italian army was mobilized.<sup>6</sup>

Before we treat of the actual steps that led to mobilization and war, we must return to Prussia's proposal for a reform in the Confederation. After April 27, Savigny had been recalled to Berlin to participate in the deliberations on the question of Federal reform. William wished only that Prussia would have rights and powers equal with those of Austria, and military supremacy at least over the northern states of the Confederacy. He also believed that a representative body elected by the people should be established along with the Diet, but the Diet should maintain the controlling authority. It was also important for Prussia to keep these proposals modest in order to prevent the possibility of foreign intervention.<sup>7</sup> The result of these deliberations was the following communication to be presented to the committee appointed by the Diet.

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<sup>5</sup>Hozier, 35.

<sup>6</sup>Mowat, 190.

<sup>7</sup>Sybel, IV, 377.

'A national assembly shall be established, to be convened periodically, which shall share in Confederate legislation, and shall replace the requirement of unanimity which has hitherto been necessary in certain cases. The functions of this Confederate body thus organized shall be concerned with such matters of common interest as are designated in the Vienna Final Act; also with the regulation of commercial intercourse, the freedom to move from State to State and hold a common citizenship, legislation respecting customs and trade, protection of German trade in foreign countries as well as of German navigation and German colors, a consular representation of Germany as a whole, the establishment of a navy, revision of the Confederate military organization by providing for the better centralization of the forces with a view to increasing the actual efficiency of the whole army and lightening the burden of the individual. With reference to the system of election to be applied to the convention of the parliament ad hoc, universal suffrage shall prevail, one representative being chosen for every one hundred thousand souls, and the eligibility of the candidate being determined as in the electoral law of 1849.'<sup>8</sup>

These proposals were modest ones, but even then they were likely to be refused by the Diet. Prussia announced that if this were the case then she would make even more strict demands in the form of reforms. Thus, on May 11, Minister von Schrenck of Bavaria gave his report according to his instructions from the lesser states. He stated that before the Confederate assembly should take any steps that Prussia should be asked to present her outline for reform. But he

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., citation of proposal for reform.

also supplemented his report with a request that Savigny should be allowed to say a few words before the vote was taken. The Prussian proposal was so moderate that the committee decided to omit the vote until the representatives had received further instructions from their governments. This was done in spite of the opposition of Austria and Darmstadt.

Austria viewed the complete Italian mobilization with some alarm. Consequently, Mensdorff sent two notes to Karolyi on April 26 which he was to present to the Prussian government. The first dealt with Italy and mobilization; the second with Schleswig-Holstein. The first despatch said that the Emperor accepted the disarmament proposal (the acceptance of which by William had been received in Vienna on April 21, a few hours after the mobilization order against Italy had been signed). He was prepared to withdraw the troops from Bohemia, but it was necessary in order to protect the Venetian frontier to put her Italian or southern army on war footing. This mobilization was a cause of the second note. "When the army [Austrian] was once mobilized, the bad condition of the Austrian finances forbade a long and inactive continuation of such an expensive state of things. Consequently, the source of the whole question, the Schleswig-Holstein question, must be got out of the way as quickly as possible." Austria, therefore, according to her notes of March 16<sup>9</sup> to the German

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 397. See also, Malet, 167-169.

states, offered Prussia small gains in Schleswig-Holstein. At the same time she stated that if Prussia did not accept this proposal, Austria would refer the matter to the Diet and would also obtain the opinion of the Schleswig-Holstein Estates.

The Austrian government knew that this declaration might lead to hostilities, and on April 27, the orders for mobilization of the northern army were given. After the mobilization against Italy had been ordered, Mensdorff had undertaken to remove as much blame from Austria for this move as he possibly could. The move against Prussia, however, caused little loss of neutral support. Mensdorff had several plans in mind. First, he could seek the neutrality of Napoleon, and secondly, he could place the Schleswig-Holstein question before the Diet at the proper time.

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Meanwhile in Berlin, Bismarck was taking no action. La Marmora requested information, but Bismarck would give none. He was waiting for the Austrian reply to his note of April 21 stating that Prussia would accept the disarmament scheme. The reply was given to him on April 28, i.e., the two Austrian despatches of April 26. To the first despatch, Bismarck replied on April 30; to the second, he did not reply until May 7.

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<sup>10</sup>Clark, 389.



The nde of April 30 declared:

That they were grievously disappointed, having expected that the re-establishment of the normal status quo would have extended to all movements of troops conducting to the war effective state. The Imperial Government, however, now alluded merely to the movements of troops in Bohemia, passing unnoticed those which had taken place in Moravia and West Galicia.

Neither could the Prussian Government recognise the motives alleged for arming in Italy, for all sources of information agreed in stating that no warlike preparations had taken place in the kingdom of Italy. . . .

The Prussian Government could not but express the hope that Austria would not only withdraw all preparations in the northern provinces, but being speedily convinced of the groundlessness of any motives for arming in the south, would consequently proceed to restore the peace establishment of the entire Imperial army. On these conditions alone, or otherwise only by maintenance of parity in war effective of both states, could the Royal Government consent to enter on negotiations!<sup>11</sup>

This despatch was delivered in Vienna on May 2, and replied to by Mensdorff on May 4. This latter despatch declared that negotiations with regard to disarmament had terminated. After the despatch of May 4, the Austrian army was strengthened by the calling in of the reserves and absentees in regiments not on war footing already. In Prussia orders for partial mobilization<sup>12</sup> were given on May 3 and 5. The reply of Bismarck to the second Austrian despatch of April 26 was dated May 7. Bismarck

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<sup>11</sup>Malet, 165-166.

<sup>12</sup>Sybel, IV, 405.

had delayed in answering this despatch because it obviously meant that the treaty of Gastein was abrogated. "For the declaration that Austria intended to bring the question before the Confederate Diet for settlement evidently could be answered only by the subordination of Prussia or a rupture that would mean war."<sup>13</sup> In his reply Bismarck stated that Prussia had every intention of abiding by the treaty of Vienna and the treaty of Gastein. Further, the intervention of any third party (this included the Diet) was precluded according to these two treaties. Prussia would not renounce her claims to the duchies to any third party, but was willing to negotiate with Austria concerning the terms on which the latter would cede her rights.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the question of the duchies had come to an impasse, and no agreement was either possible or probable.

Meanwhile the secondary states were not idle. Upon the receipt of Bismarck's despatch many of them began to arm. The government of Saxony had received a supplementary note on April 27. In this note Prussia complained of the military preparations undertaken in Saxony which seemed to be directed against Prussia, and she asked for a satisfactory explanation. The Hanoverians armed because they knew that in the event of war their territory would only be a pawn. The King of Hanover

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 402.

<sup>14</sup>Malet, 169-170.

rejected Bismarck's guarantee of territorial integrity in return for neutrality.<sup>15</sup> When Prussia started to mobilize at the beginning of May, Bavaria also began to arm. In the midst of all these preparations, an attempt was made on Bismarck's life by Cohn, a Würtemberg Republican.<sup>16</sup> But this did not unnerve him.

The situation in Germany at the beginning of May was as follows:

The Austrian Government had not ceased its movement of troops, and, convinced at length of the seriousness of the crisis, began earnestly to prepare to meet it. The fortresses of Theresienstadt and Josephstadt were armed, the fortifications of Cracow strengthened, and the restoration of the dilapidated place of arms, Königgratz, was vigorously pressed. The regiments in Bohemia, Moravia, and West Galicia were raised to their full war complement, several of them receiving their fourth battalion; the transport corps was horsed, and the reserves formed. Two regiments of Hussars from Galicia, and three of Uhlans from Hungary, entered Bohemia and Moravia. The ammunition cars of the artillery were horsed. Concentration of troops took place at Pesth, Vienna, and Laybach, and the Grenzu or frontier battalions formed a reserve of forty battalions ready to take the field. All the men on furlough were summoned to the ranks, so that the Austrian force in readiness to take the field had apparently some advantage in priority of concentration.

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<sup>15</sup>Mowat, 191.

<sup>16</sup>Sybel, IV, 406, says the man's name was Cohn. In a letter from Marquis Wierpolski to Bismarck, May 8, the name is given as Blind.

The Prussian orders for mobilization were issued between the 3rd and 12th of May. In the first instance they embraced only the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th army corps, and the guard, with a portion of the Landwehr of the 5th and 6th district, to form battalions for garrison duty, but the entire cavalry and artillery were at once brought to their full war establishment, as was the case with the 17 light infantry (Jäger) and pioneer battalions.

While all these preparations were going on, Saxony on May 5 asked the Diet to demand a statement from Prussia with regard to her intentions concerning the peace of the Confederation. Savigny replied that Prussia was only protecting her frontiers as a means of defense. If the Confederation could not assure her (Prussia) of a satisfactory explanation of these moves then she must regard it (Confederation) as a source of danger and act to protect her own interest and international position. In spite of this explanation of the Prussian envoy, the Saxon motion was carried ten votes to five on May 18. Feeling in Germany ran high and the lesser states continued to arm. On May 11 Würtemberg followed Bavaria in issuing orders for general mobilization. Nevertheless, these states were still interested in maintaining peace. On May 19

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<sup>17</sup>Malet, 173. See also, pages 174-177 where he gives a numerical summary of the relative strength of the Prussian, Austrian, and Italian, and Confederate armies. "Prussia entered the war with 600,000 men, while Austria and her allies had some 360,000 men in Germany, and 150,000 in Italy. Italy had on foot nearly 300,00 combatants, . . ."

<sup>18</sup>Sybel, IV, 409, Malet, 177; Hozier, 45, all give the same information. Hozier has the date wrong as May 9.

<sup>19</sup>Some references do not make it clear that the motion was presented on May 19, and accepted on May 24.

the following motion, which had been passed in the Conference of Bamberg attended by the representatives of Bavaria, Würtemberg, Baden, Grand-Ducal Hesse, Saxon Grand-Ducal, Brunswick, and Nassau, was made in the Diet:

'The Diet will request those members of the Confederation which have taken any steps for military preparation or movements beyond their peace establishments, to declare in the next sitting of the Diet, whether, and on what conditions, they will be prepared simultaneously to reduce their armed force to the peace establishment, and on a day to be agreed upon in the Diet's sitting.'<sup>20</sup>

On May 24 the Diet unanimously accepted this motion, and the vote was to be taken on June 1.

In the midst of these preparations, Napoleon proposed that the difficulties be settled by a congress. On April 25 Napoleon had remarked to Goltz that perhaps a congress would be able to eliminate the confusion and restore peace. But the chief difficulty was the possibility of compensation for France. However, on May 2, Benedetti officially asked Bismarck how he would receive the invitation to a congress. Bismarck said that such a congress would be agreeable if Prussia and France had some secret understanding beforehand. At first the possibility of such an understanding seemed improbable because Prussia was regarded with disfavor by the French. Secondly, Austria had offered to cede Venetia to

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<sup>20</sup>Malet, 178, cites the motion.

to Italy in return for Silesia. On May 5, Napoleon communicated this information to the Italian government, but the Italins did not favor an alliance with France against Prussia. They were beginning to feel enthusiastic about the Prussian<sup>21</sup> alliance and a dislike for any dealings with France. After this rebuff Napoleon told Goltz that his only hope was that the congress would prevent war. Consequently plans were made. England, Russia, and France were to be represented, and invitations were extended to Austria, Prussia, Italy, and the Diet on May 24.

Prussia accepted on May 29, Italy and the Diet on June 1. Austria who had been engaged in secret negotiations with<sup>22</sup> France since the end of April, had determined not to permit the question of Venetia to come before a conference. The subjects of discussion for which the conference had been summoned were: the question of the two duchies; the means of pacifying Italy; and the reform of the Diet in so far as it<sup>23</sup> affected the balance of power in Europe. Austria accepted the invitation but on two conditions, namely, that an invitation should be extended to the Pope (but this had already been refused by France, England, and Russia), and secondly, that no subject which involved territorial aggrandizement

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<sup>21</sup>Sybel, IV, 414-425, has the best account of the relations between France and Italy.

<sup>22</sup>See pages 94-95.

<sup>23</sup>Malet, 193.

should be discussed. This condition was a virtual refusal. In his answer, dated June 1, Mensdorff said that the invitation implied the cession of Venetia, but that Austria could not countenance this. But, "If war should actually break out, if brilliant military successes should raise the power of Austria, then, indeed, it would not be out of the question for us to give up one province in order to insure another."<sup>24</sup> This meant that in the event of war, Austria would give up Venetia in order to conquer Prussia and regain Silesia. It might be added that the Diet had an objection to the proposed program, namely, that the question of Holstein, leaving out the question of Schleswig, was a question which came under the jurisdiction of the Diet, and this body retained its right to decline foreign intervention.<sup>25</sup> But in view of Austria's reply, the answer of the Diet was not considered.

Austria probably made a mistake in handling the question of the conference.<sup>26</sup> Even if she had no desire to attend, it would have been better if she had delayed any definite statement. Thus, Napoleon's plans for peace had failed, but there were another peace negotiations in progress. These are known as the Gablenz negotiations.

Baron Anton Gablenz was the brother of the Austrian Statthalter of Holstein and a resident of Prussia. He was re-

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<sup>24</sup>Sybel, IV, 460-461.

<sup>25</sup>Malet, 194.

<sup>26</sup>Clark, 428-429.

garded with high esteem in governmental circles. He wished to find a satisfactory solution to the question of the duchies in order to avoid war. Gablenz appeared in Vienna in April, but Mensdorff, although he received him in a friendly manner, told him to present his plan in Prussia. Mensdorff then gave him a letter of introduction to Bismarck, and he appeared in Berlin<sup>27</sup> at the beginning of May. His plan was as follows:

Austria had desired an independent, Prussia a Prussian Schleswig-Holstein: therefore Gablenz proposed to place the sovereignty of the Duchies as an independent state in the hands of a Prussian prince. For an independent Schleswig-Holstein Prussia had imposed the 'February conditions,' and Austria rejected these as inconsistent with the Confederate military organization: Gablenz now proposed a new reform of this organization, equally to Prussia's and to Austria's advantage, by suggesting that in war and in peace Austria should have the superior command over the South German, and Prussia over the North German, troops.

Then he included other details with regard to Kiel, to fortresses and to garrisons. Austria was to receive three million thalers from Prussia for Kiel, and twenty million from the duchies for war expenses.

Bismarck was surprised by this attempt at reconciliation, especially in view of the war fever in Vienna. He decided to determine, if possible, the extent of the sincerity of Austria. On May 4, therefore, he informed Werther that Gab-

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<sup>27</sup> Sybel, IV, 414-42, has the best account of these negotiations. Clark, 414-428, also has a good account, but gives Sybel credit for the best account.



lenz would arrive in Vienna on May 5. Bismarck replied on  
<sup>28</sup>  
 May 7 to Mensdorff's second despatch of April 26. Gablenz  
 arrived in Vienna and Mensdorff promised to inform the Em-  
 peror. Both Mensdorff and Esterhazy were willing to do almost  
 anything to maintain peace, but others in the ministry were  
 not so disposed. Franz Joseph consented to a continuation of  
 the Gablenz negotiations, but asked that a more definite plan  
 be formed. Gablenz returned, therefore, to Berlin on May 10,  
 and remained there until May 20. During this time Gablenz  
 and Bismarck deliberated over the more detailed plans. Finally  
<sup>29</sup>  
 the revision was agreed upon. William approved this, and in a  
 special audience with Gablenz asked him to communicate these  
 proposals directly to Franz Joseph. Before Gablenz departed  
 again for Vienna, Manteuffel had written a letter, dated  
 May 18, to William. In this letter he described a conversation  
 with General von Gablenz, the Austrian Statthalter, and Man-  
 teuffel urged a quick and definite decision. Manteuffel, in  
 William's reply, was urged to communicate to Gablenz William's  
 desire for peace. These same sentiments were sent to Werther,  
 that is, no official action was to begin until Prussia was  
 sure of Austria's sincerity. Until that time, Gablenz was to  
 convey William's desire for peace to the Emperor.

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<sup>28</sup> See pages 85-86.

<sup>29</sup> See Appendix F.

Gablenz arrived again in Vienna on May 22, having been delayed by military transports. An interview with Franz Joseph took place. During the interview, Gablenz urged the appointment of General Gablenz as a commissioner to act with Manteuffel who would be appointed by Prussia. These two might be able to lessen the distrust which existed between the two powers. The Emperor said that these proposals came six weeks too late. For some reason the Emperor insisted that Bismarck was the author of these proposals, and nothing that Gablenz could say would dissuade the Emperor. He gave him no definite reply, but was very cordial. These negotiations actually ended at this point. They were undoubtedly the best solution of the question, but the preparations for war had progressed to such an extent that it was impossible to retreat. Secondly, Austria felt obligated to the lesser states. If she had accepted these proposals, it would have meant that she would have had to desert them to return to her Prussian alliance. On May 28, Mensdorff wrote the official Austrian reply to the effect that in view of the strained relations, no further negotiations were permissible.

Austria still continued her efforts to obtain alliances. On June 1, she had replied to Napoleon's invitation to the conference with conditions. When these conditions were made known, it became evident on what grounds Austria would seek an agreement with France. During April, Austria had approached

France, but these approaches were not successful. In view of Austria's answer to the invitation to the congress, Napoleon announced on June 3 that the plan had been abandoned. On June 4, the Emperor, Drouyn de Lhuys, and the Duc de Gramont conferred on the instructions with which Gramont would return to Vienna. Between June 4 and June 9, there were many deliberations, but a treaty was finally concluded on June 12. The first draft of the treaty "offered French neutrality on two conditions, the cession of Venetia after the war under all circumstances, and the promise not to make territorial changes without French consent, if the balance of power in Germany were threatened." These conditions were not enthusiastically received in Vienna, but Gramont was able to make further concessions which were detrimental to Italian unity. As Sybel says: "France gave up Italian unity to the Court of Vienna, in return for which Austria sacrificed German independence to the French." A Council was held in Vienna on June 11, and it was decided to accept the treaty as better than nothing, but neither the Emperor nor the ministers was pleased. Mensdorff and Gramont signed the treaty on June 12. All it did was to give Austria a feeling of security, but there were no real benefits.

Let us return to the proceedings which led directly to the

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<sup>30</sup>Clark, 407, 411-413.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 434.

declarations of war. On May 24, the Diet had accepted the motion prepared in the Bamberg Convention, and the vote was to be taken at the next session on June 1. When the Diet met Baron Kübeck presented Austria's answer.

Accordingly, Austria now declared that she had been forced to arm on account of Prussia's claims to Schleswig-Holstein, unlawful in themselves and supported by an alliance with Italy and by threats of force: Austria would disarm when a lawful and constitutional state of things was re-established in the Duchies; therefore, she was about to refer the question of the Duchies to the decision of the German Confederation, which should beforehand be assured of Austria's heartiest recognition, and she would at the same time announce that the Statthalter of Holstein had received orders to summon the Estates of the country, whose wishes and judgment in point of law should form an important factor in the final decision.<sup>33</sup>

This was virtually a declaration of war because it was well known that the Diet would support Austria, and that Prussia would retaliate with an attempt to overthrow the Confederation. To these remarks Baron de Savigny, the Prussian envoy replied. He

commenced his remarks by a repetition of the charge against Austria of having taken the lead in arming. He said, however that the Prussian government was still ready to revert to the peace establishment, if the Diet would enjoin Austria and Saxony to countermand their preparations which were menacing to peace, and if the Royal Govern-

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<sup>32</sup>John Ward, Experiences of a Diplomatist. London: Macmillan and Company, 1872, 239.

<sup>33</sup>Sybel, IV, 461.

ment could be guaranteed against similar infractions of the Federal peace. If the Diet found itself incompetent to the task, or if it opposed the introduction of such a reform as was calculated to obviate the recurrence of such situations, Prussia would found her future decisions solely on her own appreciation of rights.

In the proceedings of Austria, both as regarded her appeal to the Diet, and in convoking the States of Holstein, Prussia saw a violation of the Convention of Gastein.<sup>34</sup>

On June 3, Bismarck addressed a protest containing these ideas to Vienna. He concluded that since the treaty of Gastein had been violated, the condominium power was reestablished in the duchies, and Manteuffel had been placed in command of the defense of the condominium rights. This was followed on June 4 by a formal circular to the German states and the other European states in which he accused Austria of an attempt to bring on war, and further said that Prussia had tried to preserve peace. Bismarck published on June 5, the heretofore<sup>35</sup> secret treaty of January 16, 1864. By this he hoped to alienate the rest of Germany from Austria by showing that she had no regard for the Confederation. He seemed not to care that<sup>36</sup> this proved the same disregard by Prussia.

While these and other diplomatic notes were exchanged, military preparations were pushed forward. On June 5, General Gablenz issued the order convoking the Holstein Estates.

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<sup>34</sup>Malet, 179-180.

<sup>35</sup>See page 12.

<sup>36</sup>Mowat, 191.

Manteuffel protested. The Austrian troops at Rendsburg left on June 7, and on June 8 and 9 Manteuffel crossed the Eider. The Austrian government was declared terminated, and Baron von Scheel Plessen became Over-President of the two duchies. At Izehoe, on June 10, the Holstein Estates began to assemble. But when the representatives learned of the new turn of affairs they left. On June 11, Gablenz moved his entire force from Altona across the Elbe to Harburg during the night. This was done to avoid collision with the Prussian forces which were advancing from the north.

Prussia, on June 9, entered a protest against the intervention of the Diet in the affairs of Holstein. She reiterated her plans for reform, and would accept a satisfactory solution of the question of reform. On June 9, Mensdorff replied to Bismarck's note of June 3.

'That the rights of the Germanic Confederation neither ought to be nor could be infringed by any agreement made between Austria and Prussia; neither could any member of the Confederation, which declared its willingness to recognise the constitutional decision of the Diet, trench thereby on the right of any other Confederate.

'The Royal Prussian Government, having by word and deed ignored the binding force of its engagements to Austria, had lost the right of appealing, as against Austria, to obligations which she herself had not respected.

'That the Imperial Government protested against the taking matters into her own hands (Selbsthulfe), whereby Prussia had violated

Article XI of the constitutional Act, and had brought on the case provided for by Article XIX of the final Act of Vienna.<sup>37</sup>

On June 10, Bismarck sent the Prussian plan for the re-<sup>38</sup>form of the Confederation to all the German governments. Austria proposed in an extraordinary sitting of the Diet on June 11 that all Federal contingents should be mobilized and<sup>39</sup> be prepared to move within twenty-four hours. By a vote of nine to six,<sup>40</sup> the Austrian proposal was carried at the meeting on June 14. Karolyi had been recalled from Berlin on June 12 and passports had been sent to Werther. In this fashion Austria broke off diplomatic relations. Immediately after Austria's motion had been passed, Savigny rose and, according<sup>41</sup> to his instructions from Bismarck, he outlined the Prussian plan for reform. At the same time he declared that the old Confederation was dissolved because a break of the union had

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<sup>37</sup>For Article XI, see Appendix H. Article XIX of the Vienna Final Act is as follows: "'Should there be ground for apprehending the use of force between Confederates, or should such have taken place, the Diet has the duty of taking preliminary steps for staying all self-righting . . . , and for putting a stop thereto if begun. For this object, care is above all to be given to the maintenance of the existing right of possession.'" Malet, 187.

<sup>38</sup>See Appendix G.

<sup>39</sup>Malet, 188, in footnote. See also Sybel, IV, 493-496.

<sup>40</sup>Malet, 189.

<sup>41</sup>Sybel, IV, 496-497.

been constituted by the waging of war by the Diet on one member. He concluded by asking the states who had remained to form a new Confederation. Baron K  bek, the President, reprimanded him for this motion and the majority of the Diet concurred in the reprimand.

Meanwhile, in Prussia Bismarck had been preparing for war. On June 15, Hesse-Cassel, Hanover, and Saxony received notes from Prussia. These notes requested these governments to declare in favor of Prussia. If the reply was negative, Prussia would declare war upon the three states. Saxony refused immediately. The other two states did not answer within the prescribed time, and war was declared upon them, also. The actual war began on June 16. The Austrian declaration<sup>42</sup> followed on June 17, and the Italian on June 20.

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<sup>42</sup>Mowat, 191.



## CHAPTER V WAR AND PEACE

When war was declared between Austria and Prussia, neither power stood alone. Austria was supported by the South German states, namely, Bavaria, Württemberg, Baden and Hesse-Darmstadt, and by the more important North German States, namely, Hanover, Saxony, Hesse-Cassel, and Nassau. Prussia in view of her treaty with Italy was supported by Italy. While the majority of the members of the Confederation supported Austria, the international situation was favorable to Prussia. Great Britain's favor had been secured by low tariff relations between her and the Zollverein; Russia's, through Prussian intervention in the Polish insurrection in 1863; France, because Bismarck knew how to appeal to the political ambitions of Napoleon<sup>1</sup>. In general, the attitude of the German states was very hostile. Most of them were willing to endure any sacrifices in order to crush Prussia. Hanover was the outstanding example. By her adhesion to Austria, Hanover lost her national existence. Saxony would have suffered the same fate had it not been for the interference of Napoleon and the obstinance<sup>2</sup> of Austria during the peace negotiations.

The war was a short one, lasting only seven weeks. To the surprise of Europe, Prussian arms overcame Austria in a

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<sup>1</sup>Hayes, 188-189.

<sup>2</sup>Malet, 202-205.

short time. At the outset of the struggle the opinion of Europe favored Austria as the victor. This was because most of the powers underrated Prussia's military strength. Within two weeks Prussia had subdued the lesser German states. The most important battle in these engagements against the minor German states was the battle of Langensalza in which the Hanoverians were badly defeated by the Prussians. A week earlier, on June 27, the Bavarians had been routed at Fulda. While Prussia was subduing the lesser states, Austrian arms had been successful in Italy. This had been accomplished by the addition of part of the Austrian northern army. Unfortunately, this lowered the defenses of Bohemia and enabled the Prussian troops to enter Bohemia. Here on June 3, at Königgratz or Sadowa, the most important and decisive battle of the war was fought. Prussia was victorious. Feldzugmeister Benedek, although an able and devoted soldier, could not compare with the Prussian strategist, Moltke. When Franz Joseph heard that the Bohemian army was in retreat he tried to cede Venetia to Napoleon. In this way he hoped to involve France against Italy. Advances for peace were made to Italy,<sup>4</sup> but she refused to conclude terms of peace until Prussia did. When the Prussians won at Königgratz the war had been decided.

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<sup>3</sup>For a complete description of the war itself, see Hozier. This thesis does not include any details as to military engagements.

<sup>4</sup>Munster, 101.

On July 4, Franz Joseph telegraphed Napoleon, requesting his good offices in the peace negotiations. It was in this telegram that the Emperor agreed to cede Venetia. Immediately, Napoleon telegraphed William of these events, and offered his services as mediator. Bismarck decided that Prussia could not afford to refuse Napoleon's offer because West Germany was almost defenseless and the southern German states had not been conquered. If he refused, it was possible that Napoleon might enter the war. Consequently, he replied that Prussia was willing to accept an armistice, "but it was only on condition that the preliminaries of peace were settled before hostilities ceased, and to them the King could not agree except after consultation with the King of Italy." <sup>5</sup> Meanwhile the Prussian army advanced towards Vienna.

Bismarck was proceeding slowly because he did not wish to have the terms of peace dictated by a congress of European powers. <sup>6</sup> England, he was sure, would not interfere. Of France and Russia, he could not be so sure. Napoleon changed from day to day as to what the preliminary peace should include. Finally, on July 14, Goltz was able to send Bismarck some definite information. Benedetti arrived in Berlin to discuss the terms of peace with Bismarck, but he had no definite in-

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<sup>5</sup>Headlam-Morley, 263.

<sup>6</sup>Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, II, 580. With the death of Palmerston, British foreign policy changed, and England no longer aimed at being the arbiter of Europe.

structions. All that Benedetti had been instructed to do was to urge Prussia to moderation. Bismarck asked what non-German compensation Napoleon desired, but Benedetti remained silent. The truth of this matter seems to be that Napoleon did not know what he wanted. These negotiations were of little value to the final peace negotiations, and ultimately all that Napoleon asked was that Prussia should be moderate; that the unity of Germany should be avoided, if only in appearance; and that Saxony should be spared.<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile, Bismarck had decided to enter into separate negotiations with Austria as to the terms of the preliminary peace. This was done indirectly, at first, through diplomatic channels through St. Petersburg. An Austrian nobleman who was friendly to Prussia also undertook a mission of peace. He announced to the Emperor the terms on which Prussia would make peace. These terms were very lenient, but had been made so only after a struggle in Berlin in the Council.<sup>8</sup> In substance these terms provided for the dissolution of the old Confederation and the establishment of a new North German Confederation; secondly, Austria agreed that the southern states might form their own union; thirdly, she renounced her rights to the duchies and acquiesced in certain additions to Prussian territory; and fourth, she ceded Venetia to Italy. These preliminaries were signed at Nicolsburg on July 26.

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<sup>7</sup>Headlam-Morley, 270-273.

<sup>8</sup>See pages 105-106

The last thing that remained was to secure the assent of William. On July 12, a Council of War had been held at Prussian headquarters at Czermahoen. The Generals and even the King were enthralled with their first great victory over a first-class power. Moltke was busy with plans to capture Vienna, but Bismarck would not agree. He realized that after the war Prussia would need a friend. If the terms of peace were lenient, then the feeling in Austria would not be so hostile and proud Austria would not feel that she had been humiliated. Bismarck says in his Reminiscences: "It was my object, in view of our subsequent relations with Austria, as far as possible to avoid cause for mortifying reminiscences, if it could be managed without prejudice to our German policy."

With regard to a triumphal entry into Vienna he says:

A triumphal entry of the Prussian army into the hostile capital would naturally have been gratifying recollection for our soldiers, but it was not necessary for our policy. It would have left behind it, as also any surrender of ancient possessions to us must have done, a wound to the pride of Austria, which, without being a pressing necessity for us, would have unnecessarily increased the difficulty of our future mutual relations. It was already quite clear to me that we would have to defend the conquests of our campaign in future wars, . . . . That a war with France would succeed that with Austria lay in the logic of history, . . . .

However, two weeks passed before anything definite had to be

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<sup>9</sup> Otto Bismarck, Bismarck, the Man and the Statesman. New York: Harper and Brothers, [1898, c. d], 42.

decided since it was necessary to replenish the artillery if the Prussians were to advance to Vienna.

On July 23, another Council was held. Bismarck was only more firm in his opinion that the war should be concluded without any further humiliation of Austria. But he was alone in his opinion. He presented all his evidence including documents but still the opinion was against him. Finally, he rose and left the room, and went to his own room. While he was there musing on the probable failure of all his plans, the Crown Prince entered. He said: "You know that I was against this war. You considered it necessary and the responsibility for it lies on you. If you are now persuaded that our end is attained, and peace must be concluded, I am ready to support you, and defend your opinion with my father." The Prince then went to his father, and within half an hour he returned. "It has been a difficult business, but my father has consented. The King could not stand against both his son and Bismarck, but that he did as he did unwillingly can be testified to by the following marginal notes.

'Inasmuch as my Minister-President has left me in the lurch in the face of the enemy, and here I am not in a position to supply his place, I have discussed the question with my son; and as he has associated himself with the Minister-President's opinion, I feel myself reluctantly compelled, after such brilliant victories on the part of the army, to bite this sour apple and accept so disgraceful a peace.'<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Bismarck, 48-54. This is his own account.

Thus, after almost despairing Bismarck had won his greatest victory, and the preliminaries of peace were signed.

Before the final treaty of peace was signed, Napoleon through Drouyn de Lhuys made one more attempt to influence the peace settlement, but it was unsuccessful.<sup>11</sup> However, Bismarck<sup>12</sup> was able to use this attempt later in his war against France. The final peace was signed on August 23, 1866 at Prague by Werther for Prussia and Brenner for Austria. Venetia was ceded to Italy; Franz Joseph acknowledged the dissolution of the Confederation and the creation of a new North German Confederation to be composed of the states north of the Main. North of the Main Prussia could annex such territory as she wished, but promised to spare Saxony. The South German states could organize their own union if they wished, but Austria was forever excluded from Germany. Austria's rights in the duchies were ceded to Prussia subject to a proposed plebiscite<sup>13</sup> with regard to the wishes of the population of North Schleswig. Prussian territory was increased by 28,000 English square miles,<sup>14</sup> and the population was increased by 3½ million inhabitants. Peace between Italy and Austria was concluded on October 3, 1866 at Vienna.

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<sup>11</sup>Malet, 373.

<sup>12</sup>Headlam-Morley, 278.

<sup>13</sup>Subsequently abrogated by a treaty of October 11, 1878.

<sup>14</sup>Mowat, 195.

Thus, Prussian supremacy was established in North Germany. But what was the influence of the question of the duchies in the development of the unification of Germany? Bismarck had realized that in order to bring about Prussian hegemony in Germany and its unification, that Austria would have to be expelled from the Confederation. It was then necessary for him to have at hand a means whereby he could force a war with Austria, and through this war defeat her, and his plans for a new Confederation could be enforced. The Schleswig-Holstein question furnished the necessary pretext for embroiling Austria in war. Previous to 1865, the question had been an international one, but after that time it became an element in the relations between Austria and Prussia. During the course of the negotiations and diplomatic relations between the two powers, both of them had introduced the question of Federal reform. This was probably done to enlist the assistance of the other German states in the event of war.

Bismarck was proud of the diplomacy employed in the Schleswig-Holstein affair. He said: "'What I am proudest of, however, is our success in the Schleswig-Holstein affair, in which the diplomatic intrigues would furnish matter for a play.'" By using the divergent laws of succession of the Danish monarchy and the duchies, and the disagreement between

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<sup>15</sup>Malet, 112.

<sup>16</sup>Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, II, 581.

<sup>17</sup>Moritz Busch, Bismarck: Some Secret Pages of His History. London: Macmillan Company, 1898, I, 130.



the two with regard to the type of union, Bismarck had caused the war of 1864. By entangling Austria with Prussia in the administration of the duchies, Bismarck caused the war of 1866 and the consequent exclusion of Austria from the Confederation. In this way the hegemony of Prussia was established in North Germany. Complete unification under Prussian leadership could not be established until a war with France united the South German states to the Northern Confederation. In concluding, it is necessary to say a word about the reform of the Confederation. Some have said that the reform was the cause of the war between the two powers.<sup>18</sup> Whether or not this is true does not come within the scope of this thesis. All that has been attempted has been to show that the question of the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein was instrumental in causing a war with Austria. And secondly, that it was in virtue of this war that Austria was expelled from Germany, and Prussian leadership assured. By the Zollverein Bismarck had established Prussian economic superiority, by the war with Austria he had excluded extraneous nationalities from participation in German affairs and had secured Prussian superiority among the German states. But it still remained for a war with France to complete the political unification of Germany.

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<sup>18</sup>Mowat, 190. See also, Ernest Flag Henderson, A Short History of Germany. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916, II, 396-397.

## APPENDIX A

## BLOME'S PROPOSAL

The exercise of those rights that have been obtained by the two Powers in virtue of the Peace of Vienna shall in Holstein be the affair of Austria, and in Schleswig, of Prussia. Prussia shall for this purpose be granted a military road with stations and also a line of telegraph through Holstein; and she shall furthermore receive permission to build a canal connecting the North Sea and the Baltic on conditions similar to those usually granted in the charter of a railway (consequently, without the right of supreme domain or the right to build fortifications). The Confederation shall be requested to raise Kiel to the rank of a Confederate port, and Rendsburg to that of a Confederate fortress. Until the necessary Confederate decree is passed concerning this matter, the garrison at Rendsburg shall be composed of Austrian and Prussian troops, and the harbor of Kiel shall be used by the men-of-war of both Powers. The intention is, that both of the Duchies shall join the Tariff Union. Finally Austria shall give up to Prussia her rights in Lauenburg in return for a proper indemnity in money.

From a Prussian State Document  
cited by Sybel, IV, 210.

APPENDIX B  
TEXT OF THE TREATY OF GASTEIN

Art. 1--The common right obtained by the high contracting parties by Art. 3 of the Treaty of Vienna of the 30th of October, 1864, is transferred, as respects the Duchy of Holstein, to his Majesty the Emperor of Austria, and as respects the Duchy of Schleswig, to his Majesty the King of Prussia, without prejudice to the continuation of these rights of both Powers to the whole of both Duchies.

Art. 2--The high contracting parties will propose in the Diet the establishment of a German fleet, and appoint the port of Kiel as the Federal harbour. Until the putting in execution of the consequent Dietal decree, this port to be made use of by the ships of war of both Powers, the commandership and police of the port to be exercised by Prussia. At Friederichsort, opposite the entrance, Prussia is authorised to erect the necessary defensive works, as well as to construct such marine establishments on the Holstein shore as are requisite for a port of war. These fortifications and establishments are to be likewise under Prussian command, and the Prussian marines and sailors required for garrisoning and protection thereof may be quartered in Kiel and the vicinity.

Art. 3--The high contracting parties will propose at Frankfort to establish Rendsburg as a Federal fortress. Un-

til the Diet has regulated the mode of garrisoning this fortress, the garrison is to be composed of Imperial Austrian and Royal Prussian troops, with the command alternating yearly, on the 1st of July.

Art. 4--Until the carrying out of the partition stipulated by Art. 1 of this Convention, the Prussian Government shall have possession of two military roads through Holstein; the one from Lübeck to Kiel, the other from Hamburg to Rendsburg. Special regulations as to the places of halt are to be made as soon as possible by a separate convention, as well as for the transporting and the providing for the troops: until this is done the existing regulations for the Prussian march-routes through Hanover to be in force.

Art. 5--The Prussian Government has the privilege of using a telegraphic wire for communicating between Kiel and Rendsburg, and the right for its Post-office carriages, with its own employes, to circulate on both railway lines throughout the Duchy of Holstein.

Inasmuch as the construction of a direct railroad from Lübeck to Kiel across the boundary of Schleswig is not yet assured, the concession for the same shall be granted on the usual conditions if requisition is made by Prussia--so far regards Holstein territory--without any demand of sovereign rights, as respects the railroad, on the part of Prussia.

Art. 6--The high contracting parties hold the common intent, that the Duchies shall accede to the German customs union. Each Duchy, until further arrangement, maintains the system of customs hitherto subsisting, with equal partition of revenue, until union with the Zollverein. In case it seems expedient to the Royal Prussian Government to open negotiations for the accession of the Duchies to the Zollverein, pending the duration of the separation which has been agreed upon by Art. 1 of the present Treaty, his Majesty the Emperor of Austria is ready to name a plenipotentiary to take part in such negotiation.

Art. 7--Prussia has the right of directing through Holstein territory the intended North Sea Canal, which is to be built after the plans of the technical surveys instituted by the Royal Government; that is to say, Prussia has the right of prescribing the direction and the dimensions of the Canal, to acquire--by way of expropriation and for payment of its value--the land required for the construction, to direct the building, to have the supervision and maintenance of the Canal, and to exercise the faculty of enacting all regulatory ordinances.

No transit duties or imposts on vessel or cargo, beyond those similar normal ship-tolls for use of the Canal which Prussia will establish for the vessels of all nations, are to be exacted upon the whole extent of the Canal.

Art. 8--This Convention makes no change in the stipulations of the Vienna Treaty of 30th of October, 1864, as to the financial services to be respectively at the charge of the Duchies, of Denmark, and of Austria and Prussia; but the Duchy of Lauenburg shall be freed from all contribution to war costs. The repartition of these costs between the Duchies of Holstein and Schleswig shall be made in proportion to the population.

Art. 9--His Majesty the Emperor of Austria gives over to his Majesty the King of Prussia the rights accruing to him, by the oft-cited Treaty of Vienna, to the Duchy of Lauenburg, in exchange for which cession the Royal Prussian Government binds itself to pay the Imperial Austrian Government the sum of two millions five hundred thousand Danish rixthalers, payable in Berlin in Prussian specie, within four weeks after ratification of the present Treaty by their Majesties the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia.

Art. 10--The execution of the hereinbefore-agreed-upon partition of the joint sovereignty shall follow as speedily as possible upon the ratification of this Convention by their Majesties the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia, and at latest be carried out by the 15th of September, after

termination of the evacuation of Schleswig by the Austrian  
and of Holstein by the Prussian troops.

Signed at Gastein, the 14th of August, 1865,

(Signed)

G. Blome, M.P.

(Signed)

V. Bismarck, M.P.

Text cited from Malet, 106-110.

## APPENDIX C

## TEXT OF THE TREATY WITH ITALY

Art. I. Friendship and alliance are to be maintained between His Majesty the King of Prussia, and His Majesty the King of Italy.

Art. II. If the negotiations His Majesty the King of Prussia has opened with the other German Government concerning certain reforms of the Confederate Constitution, which are demanded by the needs of the German Nation, shall fail, and in consequence thereof His Majesty be forced to take up arms in order to give effect to his proposals, then His Majesty the King of Italy, after Prussia has taken the initiative, and so soon as he is made aware of that fact, shall in virtue of this Treaty, immediately declare war against Austria.

Art. III. From that moment the war shall be carried on by both their Majesties with all the powers that Providence has placed at their disposal; and neither Italy nor Prussia shall conclude either peace or armistice without consent of the other.

Art. IV. This consent may not be withheld, when Austria shall have expressed her willingness to cede to Italy the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom and to Prussia Austrian territory that shall be equivalent in population to the above-mentioned kingdom.



Art. V. This treaty loses its validity three months after being signed, unless the conditions mentioned in Article II. shall have been fulfilled, namely, that Prussia shall have declared war upon Austria.

Art. VI. If the Austrian fleet, which is now being equipped, shall have quitted the Adriatic Sea before the declaration of war, then shall His Majesty the King of Italy send a sufficient number of ships to the Baltic Sea, which shall take up their station there in order to be ready to unite with the Prussian fleet at the outbreak of hostilities.

From a Prussian State Document,  
cited by Sybel, IV, 355.

APPENDIX D  
PROCLAMATION OF GABLENZ

Keeping aloof from political complications, I am solely inspired by the wish sedulously to promote the development of the country's weal; a stranger to all party, and desirous of anticipating the just wishes of the people, supported by their confidence.

Cited by Malet, 115.

PROCLAMATION OF MANTEUFFEL

By the Treaty of Gastein, you are transferred to a separate Government, under the authority of the King of Prussia.

The phrase "Prussian Government" includes in itself justice, public order, and the promotion of the public good.

While from this day forth, by command of His Majesty the King of Prussia, I assume the government of the Duchy, and promise you at the same time complete attention to your peculiar interests, I expect from you obedience to His Majesty's orders, and confidence.

Cited by Malet, 116.

## APPENDIX E

## GIST OF THE PRUSSIAN DESPATCH OF MARCH 24

Prussia has irrevocably broken with Austria. The Imperial Government takes a menacing attitude. Prussia rather courts the issue and is ready to fight. Prussia expects that all Germany will side with her against Austria. The Confederation is antiquated and must be remodelled. Prussia must have control of the armed force of Germany.

Malet, 149.

## APPENDIX F

## REVISION OF GABLENZ PROPOSALS

The paragraphs concerning Schleswig-Holstein remained in general unchanged. As future sovereign of the Duchies, Prince Albrecht of Prussia was now definitely selected; and to Prussia was given beside the harbor of Kiel, both Duppel and Sonderborg.

The most important change was made in Article V., about the Confederate military organization, which received more exact specifications. 'Both Governments,' it read now, 'shall bring forward in the Confederate Assembly a motion for Confederate reform. In this matter the most urgent feature is the reform of the Confederate military organization. The rights of sovereignty of the Confederate Princes over their own contingents shall be preserved; but they shall all maintain the same system of organization, of equipment, and of drilling. The Emperor of Austria is to be both in peace and war, the Confederate commander in the South, the King of Prussia in the North. The Confederate commanders have the right and duty of providing for this similarity in system and organization. Each of them has the right, in urgent cases, to dispose the army in his charge in readiness for war, with the reservation that this disposition shall later be approved by a decree of the Confederation. Both governments,' Bismarck then added, 'shall without delay urge the acceptance and

execution of these reforms, and shall not disarm before this is accomplished. They shall for this purpose summon a convention of the German Princes and free cities, to be held at Weimar. The Princes are invited to bring their Ministers with them, and to decide upon some definite result before they separate.'

Cited by Sybel, IV,  
430-432.

## APPENDIX G

## PRUSSIAN PLAN OF REFORM

On June 1, Prussia sent her plan for the future Confederate Constitution to all the German Governments. The following were the main points: "exclusion of Austria; creation of a Confederate marine; division of the supreme military command, Prussia taking the North and Bavaria the South; a parliament to be elected by the people on the basis of universal suffrage, and which should have the functions already specified above and sharply defined; and finally, the regulation of the future relations with German Austria by means of a special treaty."

Sybel, IV, 484.

## APPENDIX H

## ARTICLE XI OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE DIET

All members of the Confederation engaged to defend Germany, and in like manner each individual Confederate State against every attack, and guarantee to each other mutually all their possessions comprised in the Confederation. In case of war declared by the Confederation no member can enter on individual negotiations or conclude a truce or peace individually. The members of the Diet retain the right of contracting any alliance, but bind themselves not to make any engagement direct against the safety of the Confederation or of any of its members. The members of the Confederation promise not to make war on each other on any pretext whatsoever, or to pursue their differences by force, but to lay them before the Diet. It then becomes the duty of the Diet to endeavour to promote an accord by a committee, and in case such attempt should fail, and a judicial decision become necessary, to bring this about by a properly instituted Austragal Tribunal, to whose sentence the contending parties are bound instantly to submit.

Cited by Malet, 153.

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The thesis, "The Relation of the Schleswig-Holstein Question to the Unification of Germany 1865-1866," written by Katherine Marie Brennan has been accepted by the Graduate School with reference to form, and by the readers whose names appear below, with reference to content. It is, therefore, accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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